Masters of Mastering
Patricia Sullivan
Andrew Mendelson
Nate Middleman
Jim Demain
+ Mixer Joe Zook

Failure Is Part of The Optimization Process
United Archiving's Bill Smith

NEW TOYS P.10
Warm Audio Foxy Tone Box

Ricky Reed • Deep Purple
Antonio Adolfo • Dan Penn • Nas • V²
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Bright Eyes

In our exclusive interview, the band's Conor Oberst, Mike Mogis and Nate Walcott discuss their recent return after a multi-year absence and how the new album Down in the Weed, Where the World Once Was, came together with the help of bassist Flea and other prominent players.

By Kurt Orzeck

Photos: Shawn Brackbill
The TASCAM Model 12 is a Portastudio for the 21st Century

TASCAM’s Model 12 is a compact all-in-one integrated mixer designed for music and multimedia creators, songwriters and performers. Features include TASCAM’s critically acclaimed multi-track recorder, USB audio/MIDI interface, DAW control functions, and unique podcasting capability including mix-minus and smartphone inputs. The Model 12 supports your creative process, production, and work-flow from start to finish including podcasting.
Beyond the Film, An Expanding Global Brand: The first question people ask about School of Rock is which came first, the school itself or the 2003 Jack Black movie, which over a decade later gave rise to the Andrew Lloyd Webber Broadway musical of the same name. Originally launched as a single location in Philadelphia in the late ‘90s called The Paul Green School of Rock Music, School of Rock has developed into a trademarked brand and global phenomenon, operating and franchising after-school music instruction schools in the U.S., Canada, South America, South Africa, Mexico, Australia, Brazil, the Philippines and more.

They are also launching in Europe later this year. According to Chief Marketing Officer Elliot Baldini, there are currently 274 locations in 10 countries worldwide (with more countries coming soon), teaching over 50,000 students per year. While the school offers adult lessons, most of the programs are designed for children age 4 and up. The company has expanded exponentially under the auspices of a Chicago-based private equity firm, Sterling Partners, that specializes in educational investments.

The School of Rock Aesthetic: Driven by a leadership team that combines business savvy, a passion for music and a drive to help children succeed, School of Rock teaches guitar, bass, drums, keyboards and vocals through a groundbreaking multi-faceted performance-based approach. The program sets itself apart from traditional programs that generally focus solely on one-on-one instruction and rarely teach students how to perform with other musicians. The trademarked School of Rock Method™ combines one-on-one instruction with group rehearsals and live performances, an approach which allows students to learn techniques, theory and sight-reading, and quickly apply those skills performing with other musicians.

Global Franchise Opportunities: Another unique aspect of School of Rock—and a factor contributing to its immense brand expansion—is its status as a Recognized Global Children’s Franchise offering franchising opportunities throughout the world. Among its distinctions are being named the No. 2 Best Franchise in its investment tier by Forbes and earning Entrepreneur magazine’s No. 1 Child Enrichment Franchise in the world. Many successful franchisees are former or partially retired musicians or music industry execs, but others are successful entrepreneurs from other industries. There are also parents who were impressed how School of Rock transformed their shy, isolated kid into a self-confident musician, finding his or her identity performing with a band onstage. All franchisees have one thing in common: a deep connection to music and appreciation for the opportunity to improve the lives of children in their local communities through the power of music. For more information: franchising.schoolofrock.com.

Contact School of Rock, 866-947-8754
Mohit Parasher

President of Business Solutions
Guitar Center

Guitar Center has announced the hiring of Mohit Parasher to the position of President of Guitar Center’s Business Solutions. In this new role, Parasher will be responsible to help drive both top- and bottom-line growth and expand the scope of Guitar Center’s Business Solutions, the company’s business-to-business arm that includes leading design and system integration firm AVDG and Guitar Center Professional. With 28 years of experience in consumer and B2B products and services across the U.S., Europe, Asia, and Middle East / Africa, Parasher brings a wealth of experience to the position. For more information, contact pr@clynedmedia.com.

Kristen Mulderig

President
Rick Sales Entertainment Group

Kristen Mulderig has been announced as President of Rick Sales Entertainment Group. In her new position, Mulderig will oversee the running of the company, supervise all staff and be integral in the career management of the company’s entire roster that includes Slayer, Ghost, Mastodon, Gojira, Dallon Weekes and his group IDKHOW and new signing Twin Temple. Mulderig began her career with an internship at Epic Records that led to her first full-time job as an assistant at Concrete Management in 1996. Later, she joined RSE and has worked with the company for 20 years. To learn more, contact herfitz@herfitzpr.com.

Dr. Jean-Marc Jot

VP of Research & Chief Scientist
iZotope

iZotope has announced that Dr. Jean-Marc Jot will join the company as Vice President of Research and Chief Scientist. Jot previously served as VP and Head of Audio and Media at Magic Leap and Senior VP and head of Research and Development at DTS. In his new position, he will spearhead the scientific discovery of enabling technologies for iZotope and collaborate across the organization on product vision. He will also oversee the audio research team and drive the company’s advanced technology strategy and roadmap. To learn more, contact alibrahim@izotope.com.

Nwaka Onwusa

Chief Curator & VP of Curatorial Affairs
Rock & Roll Hall of Fame

Nwaka Onwusa has been promoted to Chief Curator and Vice President of Curatorial Affairs for the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. Onwusa will join the Rock Hall’s senior leadership team and provide leadership and vision to the Curatorial division, which includes permanent, traveling and digital exhibitions, museum redesign creative projects, artifact collections, and library and archives. Prior to joining the Rock Hall in 2019, Nwaka spent a decade researching, developing and curating more than 20 impactful exhibits for The GRAMMY Museum at L.A. LIVE, as well as satellite and traveling exhibits. For more information, contact swilson@rockhall.org.

Ted White

Director of Operations/Chief Engineer
PMC USA

PMC has announced that pro audio industry expert Ted White has joined PMC USA as Director of Operations/Chief Engineer. With extensive experience in mixing surround sound projects for Live Nation Studios—and as a longtime PMC user and client—White is ideally placed to uphold PMC’s position as a leader in the market. White’s pro audio career has spanned many management roles encompassing marketing, technical sales and service for companies such as Solid State Logic and Harman. He has also accumulated plenty of experience as a composer, producer, engineer and audio mixer for many West Coast facilities. Contact sue@whitenoisepr.co.uk for more.

Patricia Wilson Aden

President and CEO
The Blues Foundation

Patricia Wilson Aden has been announced as the next President and CEO of The Blues Foundation. Aden brings more than three decades of nonprofit management experience to the Foundation, with a specialization in the preservation and celebration of African American cultural resources. Her most recent experience as President & CEO of the African American Museum in Philadelphia and her earlier role as Executive Director of the Rhythm & Blues Foundation make her uniquely qualified to lead The Blues Foundation and its Blues Hall of Fame. For more information, contact cary@conqueroo.com.

Kate LaBrel

President
Facet Records

Facet Records has announced that A&R veteran Kate LaBrel will join the company as its new president. In the role, LaBrel will facilitate growth and expansion of the label and the development of its roster. Bringing a wealth of experience with companies such as New West Records and Warner Chappel, she will spearhead A&R, marketing, and strategy for the company while working closely with talent such as YDE, Shea Diamond, Shawn Wasabi, Diana Gordon and more. For more information, contact peter@bbgunpr.com.

Steve Young

Director of US Sales
Audix

Audix has announced that Steve Young has joined the team as Director of US Sales. Young has served over 20 years in the pro audio manufacturing industry, most recently as Director of Large Venue Sales for Biamp/Community Loudspeakers. Prior to that, he was VP of Sales and Marketing at AtlasIED and joined Behringer for the launch of the X32 digital mixer. Young’s extended experience in the pro audio world is a welcome addition to Audix as it grows into its 36th year of manufacturing. Young will report directly to Vice President of Sales and Marketing, Steve Johnson. To learn more, contact Carl@audixusa.com.
**WARM AUDIO WA-FTB FOXY TONE BOX**

Warm Audio gets into the guitar pedal world with their first offering, the Foxy Tone Box. This is a fuzz tone pedal that is a “part-for-part” copy of the Foxx Tone Machine as used by Billy Gibbons, Peter Frampton, Adrian Belew, Nine Inch Nails, Beck and others. It’s even covered in bright orange fuzzy velour like the original.

Besides copying the circuit, Warm is using period correct NOS Fairchild 2N3565 germanium NPN transistors and old 1N34A diodes. There are three controls and two switches: Volume, Sustain, and the Fuzz tone control and a true, hard-wired bypass stomp switch and an Octave toggle adds an octave up note. We found the octave effect especially noticeable and good when playing higher up the neck. The octave’s sound is directly dependent upon the settings of the Sustain and Fuzz controls with a lot of interaction that is typical of the ‘lovable’ analog world of yesteryear.

Foxy Tone is powered by a single 9V battery inside (not included) or a standard DC wall wart power supply (included); it conforms to modern center-negative 9-VDC pedal power.

We tried both a vintage Gibson SG and a 1980s Fender Stratocaster. The first of three of my guitar players said was “this is fun playing through a fuzz tone—it makes each note sustain and distinct.” I thought the SG sounded fat yet with that SG mid-range “honk.” The Strat was a little cleaner and more like the fuzz tone guitar sounds of the ‘60s.

The Warm Audio Foxy Tone Box sells for $149 MSRP and makes a great addition to any electric guitar pedal board for instant, all-analog fuzz. Awesome!

[warmaudio.com](http://warmaudio.com)

**EVENTIDE CRUSHSTATION PLUG-IN**

Eventide’s CrushStation is a plug-in version of a popular algorithm from Eventide’s H9 stomp box. CrushStation is a stereo distortion system for Macs, PCs, or iPad/iPhones. It comes with 35 excellent and well thought out presets that do more than just “rough up” the sound.

I’m using CrushStation in my Pro Tools music mixing as an AAX plug-in to add mostly color and “dirty” compression. But there are other processors here: how about a good three-band equalizer, a simplified noise gate, or an octave mixer that is glitch-free with both upper and lower octaves ready to go.

I especially like the built-in programmable Ribbon controller. It adds a live performance feel easily. The Ribbon is automatable and you can program several parameters to morph between or change back and forth simultaneously to fit the music. I had loads of fun with this very creative tool programming the Ribbon on an ordinary-sounding bass guitar track. I started with a preset called Hair On Your Chest and then got sufficiently wacky.

I also found the HotSwitch useful to go between two sets of control parameters within the same preset. I use this for two levels of crush on a single guitar track. I ended up using and modifying a preset called “VHS Tape” for a funky clarinet track and put preset “Punkrock Lobster” on the drum overhead tracks. Nothing this fun sounding has come out of my studio monitors for a long while.

Eventide CrushStation is part of the H9 Plug-in Series that includes UltraTap, MangleVerb, Blackhole and Spring, CrushStation sells for $99 MSRP. Crazy fun CrushStation!

[eventideaudio.com/products/effects/overdrive-distortion/crushstation](http://eventideaudio.com/products/effects/overdrive-distortion/crushstation)

**YAMAHA PSR-SX600**

The PSR-SX600 replaces the PSR-S670 in Yamaha’s family of arranger keyboards whose advanced features are derived from the flagship Yamaha Genos digital workstation.

The PSR-SX600, with the Smart Chord feature, lets musicians with or without keyboard proficiency utilize the Style engine to sketch out fully orchestrated arrangements. The Unison Styles and Accent Styles are automatic accompaniment Styles with a virtual backup band of expert musicians. With Yamaha Voice and Style Expansion ROM packs, the PSR-SX600 presents a nearly limitless galaxy of musical possibilities.

New studio-quality DSP effects let the player add distortion to a guitar voice, reverb to a piano and more. There is a microphone input for singing or playing guitar through the PSR’s effects and EQ. There is also a vocal cancellation function for karaoke sing-alongs to pre-existing tracks. You can record your performances and use either the time-stretching and/or pitch-shifting processing to create the perfect take.

The PSR-SX600 is designed to work without a computer giving solo performers, songwriters, and hobbyist musicians all they need to craft complete and highly polished songs. There is also USB audio with a high-quality digital-to-analog converter and MIDI connectivity to your computer DAW system.

The Yamaha PSR-SX600 sells for $1,399 MSRP.

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**NEW TOYS**

**PRESONUS STUDIO ONE 5**

The new PreSonus Studio One 5 for both Macs and Windows PCs has numerous live performance and scoring features all together in one DAW, making it possible to run complete shows from a single computer.

The Show Page plays backing tracks, does patch management for virtual and real instrument players with the Studio One Song channel strips, mixes, and virtual instrument patches all exportable to the show.

Set list items can be rearranged and skipped “on the fly” making running a show simple and reliable, whether you’re playing with backing tracks, controlling virtual instruments, running plug-ins as virtual effects, or all at the same time!

Composers and arrangers will appreciate Studio One 5’s dedicated Score View for the Note Editor available on its own or as a companion side-by-side view with the Piano and Drum views. With version 5, Native Effects has a new interface with the dynamics effects having sidechain inputs, and the Pro EQ plug-in adds a linear-phase low-cut filter, 12th-octave spectrum display, and input and output meters.

Studio One Artist now has built-in support for VST and AU plug-ins, ReWire, and PreSonus’ Studio One Remote control software for iPad® and Android® tablets. Formerly, these were only available for Studio One Artist as separate Add-ons and I’m only scratching the shiny new surface of this wonderful update!

Studio One 5 Artist is $99.95 and updates from version 4 for $49.95. Studio One 5 Professional is $399.95 and updates from Studio One 4 Pro for $149.95.

[shop.presonus.com/software](http://shop.presonus.com/software).

**SONIBLE • FOCUSRITE BALANCER**

Sonible Balancer is part of the Focusrite Plug-in Collective and is offered free. Balancer is an automatic processor that “learns” a short section of audio and then applies an adaptive smart filter following a certain, preset sonic profile.

The profiles provided are for: kick, snare, hi-hat, drums kit, bass, acoustic guitar, electric guitar, keyboards, and separate female and male vocal profiles. There is also a Universal profile or default mode. It takes only seconds to scan an audio track and then you can use any of three overall timbres or Flavors: Warm, Neutral, and Bright. Furthermore, there is an Intensity fader to raise or lower them as well.

I tried Balancer on all sorts of sources in Pro Tools and I found it a good tool for trying on kicks, snares and vocals. I had fun purposely using the wrong profile! I liked using the vocal profiles on a kick drum! So there is room to experiment here even though this plug-in has limited parameter controls.

Sonible is free, all fun and excellent for anybody from beginners to professionals. To join Focusrite’s Plug-in Collective for access to many great partners and free software. Simply register any Focusrite hardware product, and then look out for a new offer every couple of months.

[sonible.com/balancer](http://sonible.com/balancer)

**AMS NEVE 8424 CONSOLE**

British manufacturer AMS has the Neve® 8424 console—a small format console based on the iconic 80-series console range designed, sized, and priced for the home/project studio. The Neve 8424 is the best example I’ve seen yet that compliments the “in-the-box” workflow perfectly by efficiently linking analog outboard gear to your DAW.

The 8424 measures: 3.8 W X 2.78 D X 1.2 H-feet, making it the perfect size for a person to sit in front of and easily reach and control up to 48 channels fed to its analog summing bus. It has a dual-input channel strip architecture that enables easily switching between recording and mixing modes without necessitating any re-patching of input signals.

There are 24 line-level inputs, a pair of onboard Neve 1073® preamps, and dual Instrument DI channels. I liked the 8424’s center section with its dual-cue mix system, dual headphone amplifiers, talkback/return talkback, and multiple monitor speaker selection.

When in mix mode, you can have 24 DAW channels play across 24 100-mm channel faders and also use the 24 inline monitor pots for a total of 48 mono inputs to mix.

If you’re asked to produce stems of your stereo mix, there are four mono groups with 2-band shelving EQs, inserts, and direct outputs. Also included as standard kit, are stereo bus insert points, two-band shelving EQ, and Neve’s own stereo width module. Two onboard 500 series slots are ready to accept any 500 module(s) to be used as inserts.

The Neve 8424’s Recall system stores and recalls snap shots of all settings, faders, and control pot positions for each session and along with your DAW automation, resetting a cool mix you had last week will not take not much longer than booting up your computer.

The Neve® 8424 console sells for $24,950 MSRP with many upgrade options.


**BARRY RUDOLPH** is a recording engineer/mixer who has worked on over 30 gold and platinum records. He has recorded and/or mixed Lynyrd Skynyrd, Hall & Oates, Pat Benatar, Rod Stewart, the Corrs and more. Barry has his own futuristic music mixing facility in North Hollywood called Tones 4 Studios. He is a lifetime Grammy-voting member of NARAS and a contributing editor for Mix Magazine. barryrudolph.com

[Barry Rudolph](http://barryrudolph.com)
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- David Foster
14-time Grammy Award winning songwriter & producer

masterwriter.com
John Lennon 1980 – The Last Days In The Life
By Kenneth Womack
(paperback) $19.99
Womack's book is a vivid account of how John Lennon lived and worked during the final, revitalized year of his life. It’s the story of how a once creative individual overcame obstacles to rediscover his muse and re-enter “the game,” culminating in the release of his and Yoko Ono’s Double Fantasy album. An engrossing read for Beatles fans, Womack’s thoroughly researched book focuses not on how Lennon died tragically, but on how he lived fully during that last year of his life. The book comes with a tribute CD from Jem Records featuring artists including The Anderson Council, The Gripweeds and Richard Barone.

The Big Life of Little Richard
By Mark Ribowsky
(hardcover) $26.99
In the first major bio of the flamboyant rock & roll giant, the author explores Little Richard in all dimensions: musicianship, family life, battles against racism, interaction with contemporaries (including hanging with the early Beatles in Hamburg, and his experiences with his young sideman Jimi Hendrix), and his lifelong conflict between his religion and his sexuality. Ribowsky’s book is a vivid account of a one-of-a-kind artist.

To Hell and Back: My Life in Johnny Thunders’ Heartbreakers, in the Words of the Last Man Standing
By Walter Lure with Dave Thompson
(hardcover) $25.95
Hardcore fans of the punk rock Heartbreakers will dig this insider’s account of what was, perhaps, rock’s most dysfunctional band. Lure, the band’s bassist (and lead singer on key songs), covers all the key moments, including the band’s chaotic beginnings on New York’s Lower East Side and its infamous tour with the Sex Pistols and the Clash—eyewitness and midwife to the birth of U.K. punk. Fans of the tumultuous Thunders/Dolls/Heartbreakers world will eat this up.

How to Write One Song
By Jeff Tweedy
(hardcover) $23.00
In this follow-up to Tweedy’s bestselling 2019 memoir, Let’s Go (So We Can Get Back), the Wilco frontman presents a unique primer on what he knows best, revealing both the behind-the-scenes process, and the joy he gets from making something new. Best of all, How To Write One Song offers actionable and practical tips on overcoming self-defeating dialog, building a creative habit, language techniques to get out of a writing comfort zone, easy recording methods, and more.

The Hidden History of Music Row
By Brian Allison, Elizabeth Elkins and Vanessa Olivarez
(paperback) $21.99
Nashville has a much deeper history than you know and this new book delves into it in a consistently engaging fashion, untangling myth from legend from fact. The city is about much more than the renowned music-makers, but those stars and their haunts are given plenty of ink here. It also contains plenty of photos of artists like Johnny Cash, Patsy Cline, Kris Kristofferson and Bob Dylan as well as the landmark buildings they worked and played in.

Levon
By Sandra B. Tooze
(hardcover) $29.99
Levon traces singer-drummer Levon Helm’s rebellious life on the road, from being booed with Bob Dylan, to the creative cauldron of Big Pink, the Woodstock Festival, world tours, The Last Waltz and beyond with the man Dylan called “one of the last true great spirits of my or any other generation.” The author especially delves into Helm’s upbeat final act, as he lived a full creative life despite the unfortunate dissolution of The Band.
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Lukas Graham, Erykah Badu, Jenny Lewis, Pink

Making it All Happen

Phone/Text: 818-222-2058 • ellis@studioreferral.com
From Recording Studio to Mastering Facility: The story of how Nashville based veteran musician and producer Dan Emery shifted from co-owner of a studio collective to mastering engineer shows how even the worst of calamities can ultimately lead to bigger, better things. By 2010, Emery’s McAlpine House Studios—which filled the rooms of a large home—had been humming along, hosting sessions for artists for six years. Then the 2010 Tennessee Floods hit. While Emery and his staff salvaged most of their equipment—including its vintage Soundcraft 500 console—the space was rendered useless. Regrouping in the wake of the disaster, his original plan was to open a similar facility in his new home, but his desire to work more independently and on his own clock—combined with his longtime fascination with the “dark arts of mastering”—led him instead to launch Black Matter Mastering.

Building BMM: Drawing from the network he had cultivated with his previous studio, Emery started out mastering mostly punk and metal bands. Though BMM is focused primarily on post production (mixing and mastering), it also has recording capabilities and he has edited many podcasts and audiobooks as well. His expansive background in so many areas of production—recording, mixing, mastering, electroplating for vinyl, manufacturing all formats of media, live production—he intentionally keeps his business model loose and non-traditional. One of his unique offerings is remastering old acetates and demo cassettes, including some of the earliest rare 80’s material from GWAR.

Vinyl Etching Services: Emery has secured many of his larger clients and projects by offering his expertise in vinyl etching, which is an image pressed into an unplayable side of an album and has a frosted appearance. Generally, the etched side doesn’t contain any grooves or music. Emery, however, can etch images onto playable sides as well. Emery takes the blank lacquer and uses chemicals to etch visual images onto them. The process adds a touch of visual style and is a way to enhance the artistic aesthetic of the album.

Anti-Corp: In 2001, Emery—who still plays in a punk band—launched an indie label for local metal and punk bands. Over the years, even as he built his other businesses, the label’s roster has grown to include hip-hop (including Kool Keith) and, these past years, Americana, folk and bluegrass alongside the metal and punk. The label has recently begun releasing albums of live performances by acoustic bands, who perform outdoors at night under a huge magnolia tree behind the studio. In addition to mic’ing every instrument, Emery built a binaural mic for these sessions to pick up the details of every ambient sound, which creates an almost 3-D audio effect.

Contact Black Matter Mastering, 615-424-6509
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**Webster Recruits Legends for A Woman Like Me**

Contemporary jazz leader Lindsey Webster recorded her new album *A Woman Like Me* at United Recording shortly before the Safer at Home order was issued. For her sessions at United, Webster assembled a cast of legendary sidemen to realize her vision: Luis Conte on percussion, Vinnie Colaiuta on drums, Nathan East on bass, and Keith Slattery on keys, who also shares producer and composer credits. Mark Gray engineered alongside United’s Wesley Sideman.

**Speelburg Readies the Porsche**

Rising electro-pop artist Speelburg is releasing his debut studio album *Porsche* on Oct. 2 via Sophomore Slump in partnership with Kartel Music Group. The 11-song album was written and produced by Speelburg aka Noah Sacré and was recorded at his home studio in Brighton, England. *Porsche* was mixed by Grammy Award-winning producer Ben H. Allen (Gnarls Barkley, Animal Collective, Kaiser Chiefs).

**Cut Worms Puts a Close On New Album**

Brooklyn based singer-songwriter Max Clarke, known by his stage name Cut Worms, has spent the better part of the lockdown chipping away at his upcoming album *Nobody Lives Here Anymore*, which will be released on Oct. 9 via Jagjaguwar. Pictured here, Clarke tracks keys during a session at Sam Phillips Studio in Nashville, TN.

**Pooh Shiesty Preps for So Icy Gang Compilation**

Rapper Pooh Shiesty recently hit the studio in Atlanta, GA to record a track that will be included on the upcoming So Icy Gang compilation due for release in October and released via Gucci Mane’s new label venture, The New 1017. Shiesty broke into the hip-hop scene in 2018 and was brought onto Gucci’s label earlier this year.

**Producer Playback**

“Be sure of your mixes. Don’t go into mastering saying ‘I think this is what I want to do.’ Find an engineer whose work you like ... Find someone who fits your music’s personality.”

– Chris Gehringer (Madonna, The Neighborhood)
Kev Kelly Takes on Sound Emporium
Pop artist Kev Kelly recently spent a day at the historic Sound Emporium Studios in Nashville, TN for a long studio session. He sat down at the keys to record an acoustic version of the single “Everything’s On Fire” off his debut EP *Saint KDK V*. “We recorded it in Studio A,” Kelly said. “We also filmed the video for the acoustic version in the same space.”

Abbey Road Institute Gets Some New Digs
The Abbey Road Institute has outfitted its new production and sound engineering school, held at Julio Reyes Copello’s Art House Studios in Miami, FL, with an SSL ORIGIN analog in-line mixing console. “It is part of our mission to provide students with access to the best audio solutions available,” said Copello. “Our new ORIGIN will play an integral role in helping students understand key workflow concepts in a modern production environment, while providing real-world experience working on a world-class mixing console.”

Color Fields’ Torres Ponders “Ships in the Dark”
John Torres, lead singer and guitarist of the band Color Fields, looks on as indie production legend Peter Katis (The National, Death Cab for Cutie, Frightened Rabbit) hones in on a mix for the track “Ships in the Dark” from their debut EP. The band worked with Katis on two tracks at Tarquin Studios in Bridgeport, CT. The band has a foot in both the indie and pop worlds, also working with famed pop/R&B/hip-hop producer Jerry Wonda on the EP.
The Art & Craft of Self-Producing

Country singer-songwriter Caroline Jones launched her production career at virtually the same time she began writing music. Indeed, she took the reins on her first record *Fallen Flower* in 2011 and more recently along with one of her mentors, Ric Wake (Mariah Carey, Trisha Yearwood), she co-produced her 2019 EP *Chasin’ Me*. Early in her career Jones networked with Nashville notables, which helped her to land a distribution deal with Jimmy Buffett’s label Mailboat Records. “I went down to Nashville at a young age,” the artist and producer recalls of her formative years. “I was taken under the wing of Mac McAnally, who’s a 10-time CMA musician of the year. I was able to witness the studio musician scene and level of musicianship that’s down there. I fell in love with the art of production. Ever since then, I’ve written and produced my own records. I’ve never just wanted to go in the booth and sing.”

A key skill she’s harvested from her collaboration with McAnally is the ability to focus on a song idea as a whole as opposed to its smaller, more distinct elements. “Mac has this big-picture perspective that I sometimes lose because I get detail-oriented and caught up in trying to give my best performance,” Jones says. “He keeps us centered.”

“I've learned so much about recording and mixing just by osmosis,” she continues. “I work closely with [engineer] Gustavo Celis and have watched him for hundreds of hours. I'm continually amazed by how delicate of a craft it is. The balance of one or two instruments can offset an entire song.” Artists approach songwriting in many ways. Some set aside time to create while others are subject largely to inspiration’s whims. “I'm always writing little pieces,” Jones observes. “But I'm pretty selective about the songs that I finish. Then I’ll bring those to Ric and Gus—people whose opinions I trust. Usually we're on the same page because I have a good feel for what my best work is and the songs will mature in pre-production. I've also enjoyed developing songs on the road over the past few years. I'm more of an inspiration junkie. I don’t write that many. The ones I do [write] end up on my records.”

Once she’s narrowed the field, Jones’ choices are always vindicated. “The sheer amount of ideas that I try to throw against the wall to see which ones work is a process of trial and error,” Jones explains. “I’m influenced by various styles of music and I love several different production aesthetics. Learning that has been a journey and a challenge at times because I have to make the best decisions in the moment. It’s a real testament to my team that they allow me to learn firsthand instead of shooting down my ideas; to actually allow me to put them down on tape and hear which ones work. That’s the joy of the creative process.”

Recently she released a remix EP that includes four versions—a dance mix and a jazz rendering, for example—of “All of the Boys,” one of her recent singles. She’ll continue to release new music by way of Buffett’s Mailboat Records with the aim of one single per month. Jones remains open to producing alongside other artists in the future, but her preference is for a co-production relationship.
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--- ANDY KAUFMANN

**Emmanuel Zunz**  
*Owner / Founder*  
ONErpm

**Years with Company:** 10  
**Address:** 180 Varick St., New York, NY 10014  
**Web:** onerpm.com  
**E-mail:** ez@onerpm.com  
**Clients:** Yelawolf, Method Man, Trace Adkins, Elohim, Lisa Loeb, Paul Oakenfold, Our Vinyl, Elevator

**BACKGROUND**

Over the past decade, Emmanuel Zunz’s digital rights platform, ONErpm, has grown to include more than 300 million subscribers and two billion audio streams per month. Yet beyond taking modern media distribution to the next level, the global outfit has expanded in myriad ways and now offers a comprehensive suite of services appropriate for artists of any size.

**The New Interface**

We’re in the midst of launching a new site. It has a lot more marketing components to it and it’s going to be a great resource. It’s also going to help our business in a tremendous way. We’ve invested a lot of resources [into this] and we’re having some interesting breakthroughs. We need it because our business has evolved into being much more customized.

**Promotional Campaign Consistency**

We’ve developed a robust backend technology that helps us manage campaigns in a consistent manner. We have a checklist that allows us to make sure we’re doing all the work within the specified time period. Since we’ve launched this [backend system] 18 months ago, we’ve done 9,000 campaigns. Some are very simple, like three to five tasks. The most comprehensive campaigns have 100 to 120 action items. It holds us accountable because if we don’t do something everybody sees it. And when it’s complete, we create a report and give it to our clients.

**Service Tiers**

We have the basic tier, which is [purely access to] our distribution platform. Anybody can sign up. It’s pure tech; [users] just engage with the site. It’s low-level support but it’s free and there are no restrictions. The second level of service is called Taking Off. This is for artists who need customized marketing but don’t need all the bells and whistles. Then there’s Next Level, which is more of a label model for bigger budgets and more global. And then there’s Verge Records, which we re-launched last year. There, we’re doing more traditional label-type deals, but the bulk of our business is still licensing.

**Negotiations and Merlin**

A lot of people don’t realize that not all deals are the same. They say, well, this company is giving me a better rate, so I’m going to go with them. Yeah, but you might actually make less money because they didn’t negotiate like we did. Or they don’t have the market share we do that [allows us to] extract benefits. And a lot of people don’t understand that the major labels have always had the advantage.

This is why organizations like Merlin [Network] exist. For some deals, we’ve opted in because we think that by joining forces we can collectively get a better rate. But on some deals we negotiate direct. It’s very helpful, especially in markets like China where we don’t have any presence. We don’t have the ability to go in those markets and negotiate the best terms. Merlin does that for us.

**Having a Vested Interest in Beneficial Treatment**

We only make money when the artist makes money. We don’t charge for our DIY service, so we’re very much interested in negotiating the best terms possible with DSPs. I suspect many of these DIY companies that aren’t earning money off revenue aren’t as concerned about their rates or privileges because they’re just making money on uploads and not the actual performance of tracks.

**Commitments Going Both Ways**

In order to get access to our marketing support, artists usually have to have an exclusive deal with ONErpm. We require a commitment from artists to give them our marketing.

And it’s not just marketing. It’s money to develop. We do everything. In that sense, we’re just like a label. I don’t see a big difference between a distribution deal that provides services and a record label. It just depends on what kind of rights you’re negotiating.

**Global Footprint**

We’re a full-service music company, so you need feet on the ground in each market. One of our advantages is we don’t have this headquarters mentality where we have a bunch of people in one building and remotely service our clients. In Brazil, we have 120 people. In Mexico, I have 30. In Columbia, I have 30. In the U.S., I have 40. In Russia, I have 18. You need feet on the ground and local expertise.

**Free Studio Access**

We have studios in Brooklyn, Nashville, Mexico City, Sao Paulo and Columbia. In every major market, we want studio production facilities. It’s a complimentary service that’s part of our overall marketing package. People who get access are the ones we’ve signed to exclusive deals.

**Getting Synched**

We have a burgeoning publishing business. It’s still new, so that’s a separate negotiation on the commercial side. And if [our artists] want to be part of our pub admin, synch is part of that. But the synch component is non-exclusive, so [artists] always have the right to opt out. I don’t think we’re particularly strong in synch but it’s something we’re working on.

**A Developing Situation**

Most people don’t understand what we do. They think we’re just another DIY upload platform. We’re a full-service music company with the ability to provide solutions to any type of artist at any level of their career. Yeah, you can use ONErpm to just upload music and deliver it to different stores, but we’re much more than that. And we want to engage with artists at that level. We’re much more interested in helping artists develop their careers than just providing a DIY service.

**Engaging in New Ways of Working**

We’re not bound to any previous ways of doing business. We’re not copying anybody’s business model. We’re not trying to be Sony or Warner or anybody else. We do what we think makes sense and what’s fair. We want to help artists succeed. That’s the main thing.

And sometimes to succeed you need a lot of resources. When we provide those resources, it’s not a distribution deal anymore. We’re able to provide artists with the full array of promotional tools and support. That’s not a distribution deal. That’s a different type of business.

**Playlisting and New Music Discovery Tools**

Playlisting has an important role to play in music discovery and promotion, but other platforms will find ways to break music. Playlisting is important because Spotify is important. A playlist on Spotify is more important than a playlist on Napster or Amazon Prime because Spotify has more market share. But I wouldn’t say playlisting is the most important thing. Playlisting is just one tool artists have at their disposal.

**Different Companies Provide Different Outcomes**

Find a partner that is going to help you develop your business and be around for a while, as opposed to fixating on the cheapest option. If you go with the cheapest, you’re going to get what you pay for. The wrong question to ask is - what percentage are you going to give me? That is not the most important thing. But that’s what most people fixate on because they don’t understand the difference between companies. Most people make the assumption that all these companies are the same. You’ve got to do your research to understand the difference.
The City of Long Beach needs a part-time music/jazz instructor. The teaching assignment may be at the Liberal Arts campus, the Pacific Coast campus or other college teaching locations. The assignment may be day, evening, weekend, online or off campus and is subject to change as needed. Part-time faculty positions are as needed and do not accrue rights to tenure. Part-time faculty positions offer flexible hours and the opportunity to assist a diverse group of adult students in achieving their educational goals. They offer a wide range of opportunities in transfer, general education, vocational and occupational programs. Apply via LinkedIn.

Universal Music Group needs an A&R research manager. In this position, you will construct statistical insights and predictive metrics, conducting research on artists, and analyzing new music. These efforts will be focused on evaluating song performance, identify new artists, support promotion strategy, and improve the label’s understanding of new music metrics. Apply at EntertainmentCareers.net.

Open Inc. is looking for a director of music. In this role, you’ll be responsible for leading music strategy for Open. This is a rare opportunity to contribute to building a social product that has the power to transform people’s lives for the better, with music at the nexus of the experience. You possess a passion for culture and creativity, with a natural knack for business and operations. You can expertly navigate the industry legal landscape, create processes from square one, lead artist negotiations, and build a critical pillar of our product through your unwavering commitment to problem solving and a passion for music. Apply at Lever.

For More Career Opportunities, check out musicconnection.com daily. And sign up for MC’s Weekly Bulletin newsletter.

Dutch rock trio Our Oceans have signed an international deal with Long Branch Records. Singer-guitarist Tymon Kruidenier said in a press release of new single “Unravel” and forthcoming album While Time Disappears that, “‘Unravel’ is probably one of the more unique songs on the album, with its uptempo vibe and many ups and downs. It’s about recognizing and breaking down the plethora of coping mechanisms we tend to build into our sense of self over the course of our lives. It’s a song about rediscovering who you are underneath it all.” Contact davidmcderg@gmail.com for more info.

New country duo Southerland have signed a publishing deal with Reserve. A press release reads, “Southerland has developed naturally since becoming a duo, combining the lyrical storytelling and musical foundation of traditional country music with the widespread appeal of today’s top country hits.” Contact catherine.snead@sackscos.com for more info.

Proprys

Congratulations to Matt Maeson, who became the first male solo artist to achieve two Billboard alternative hits on a debut album. “Acclaimed singer-songwriter Matt Maeson has achieved another Alternative Radio #1 hit with ‘Hallucinogenics,’ taken from his 2019 debut album Bank On The Funeral,” reads a press release. “‘Hallucinogenics’ marks Maeson’s 2nd #1 at Alt Radio in 12 months, following his single ‘Cringe’ that hit #1 this same week last year.” Contact gabrielle.reese@atlanticrecords.com for more info.

Scott and Sandi Borchetta are rewarding $150,000 in grants for music education non-profits. They announced at the start of September a contest for 501c3 non-profit music schools and organizations. Fifteen recipients will be awarded $10,000 grants.

The grants are supported by the Borchettas’ MUSIC HAS VALUE Fund, which they created in 2015 to provide financial support to organizations that support those who make music, aspire to make music, and access and appreciate music. Contact jake.basden@bmlg.net for more info.

The Biz

Former Motown exec Darrell Thompson has co-founded a new music streaming platform called Deepr. “Deepr(R) was inspired by the exciting new technological frontier of streaming music and wanted to remedy the...
The lack of resources available to help frustrated music-loving consumers. The app has a firm footing in the music industry due to the vast experience of its founders, Austin Webster, an admitted music junkie, with 13 years experience in product and software development that contributed to projects for various Fortune 500 companies, and Darrell Thompson, an entertainment attorney, who has executed business development and deals in music, TV and film. Contact kai@goingpublicpr.com for more info.

OnNow.tv launched in August to offer a TV guide to livestreamed concerts “OnNow.tv is platform agnostic, drawing from all livestreaming platforms like Twitch and YouTube Live and social media feeds via APIs. It serves both form agnostic, drawing from all concerts that contributed to projects for various Fortune 500 companies, and Darrell Thompson, an entertainment attorney, who has executed business development and deals in music, TV and film.” Contact kai@goingpublicpr.com for more info.

BRETT CALLWOOD has written about music for two decades, originally for Kerrang!, Classic Rock, Metal Hammer and more in the UK. He’s the author of two books, about Detroit proto-punks the MC5 and the Stooges. He’s now the music editor at LA Weekly, and has regular bylines in the SF Weekly, Tucson Weekly and dbot Radio, as well as here in Music Connection. He can be reached at brettcallwood@gmail.com.

50 Cent Loses Appeal Against Rick Ross

BY GLENN LITWAK

50 claimed that Ross unlawfully used his name and voice in his remix.”

“Likeness” for a commercial purpose, such as advertising or promo. And the “right of publicity” is a person’s right to control and profit from the commercial exploitation of his or her name, likeness and persona.

The district court held that Jackson’s claims were not valid because he did not own the copyright or the right of publicity at the time of the recording. It was actually 50’s former record label, Shady/Aftermath, that owned these rights. The lawsuit was dismissed by the court in 2018. Jackson appealed to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit in New York. On Aug. 19, 2020, the court upheld the dismissal by the lower court. The appeals court also stated that Shady/Aftermath might have the right to sue, or 50 could sue Shady for not protecting his rights. The Court of Appeals ruled that on the basis that “Roberts did not employ Jackson’s name or persona in a manner that falsely implied employ Jackson’s name or persona on the basis that “Roberts did not employ Jackson’s name or persona in a manner that falsely implied endorsement of Roberts, his mixtape, or his forthcoming album,” and the court also ruled that federal copyright law took precedence of 50’s state law right of publicity claim.

50 had signed a recording contract with Shady/Aftermath that gave them “perpetual and exclusive rights to advertise his name and reputation.” 50’s lawyer also stated that Ross used “In Da Club” unlawfully to advertise his own album.

By way of background, using the “name and likeness” of a person happens when an individual or business uses someone’s name, photograph, or other defining attributes or characteristics to identify and promote the person as a trademark or business. “50 claimed that Ross unlawfully used his own album.”

Using a recording of Jackson’s song “In Da Club” for rap music, this ruling seems to create an entirely new legal hurdle for individual artists and those who work with individual artists. The court upheld the dismissal by the lower court. The appeals court also stated according to Ross’s attorneys that “Had 50 Cent been successful in this, it would’ve had the effect of making licensees not only have to go to the owner of the underlying master copyright, and the underlying musical-composition copyright owner,” but also “it would’ve made them possibly have to go to each individual artist and obtain their right of publicity, which would’ve created an entirely new legal hurdle in order to exploit music.”

Since sampling is so prominent in rap music, this ruling seems to favor artists who want to legally use samples without any new impediments.

GLENN LITWAK is a veteran entertainment attorney based in Santa Monica, CA. He has represented platinum selling recording artists, Grammy winning music producers, hit songwriters, management and production companies, music publishers and independent record labels. Glenn is also a frequent speaker at music industry conferences around the country, such as South by Southwest, and the Billboard Music in Film and TV Conference. Email Litwak at glitwak@gmail.com or visit glenlitwak.com.

This article is a very brief overview of the subject matter and does not constitute legal advice.
Hi Friends,
It's been awhile, but I'm still here!!

TAXI has been the singular catalyst for me in the past 2 years. I am closing in on 2 years of membership and my experience has been overwhelming. I will be at the Road Rally this year, as I've recently been invited to speak at the 'Successful Members' panel.

This is all beyond humbling to me, and I feel indebted to Michael and his incredibly talented staff.

Taking Risks...
In a nutshell, TAXI has motivated me and allowed me to take creative risks; to dabble in genres I didn't even know existed, and to develop relationships with high-level music professionals I otherwise would NEVER have had access to.

Major Publishers
So far this year I've signed 13 songs with major publishers. I'm writing with people all over the USA, and have made regular trips to Nashville a part of my routine. I've been co-writing with a guy who has had multiple (recent) #1's. It boggles my mind actually.

Once in a Lifetime Opportunity!
I'm writing Hip Hop tracks for a well known rapper's next project, and I'm connected to a Multi-Platinum, Grammy-Winning Producer who allows/asks me to regularly send him material to pitch to the biggest artists in music. That in and of itself is enough is a once in a lifetime opportunity, and it's been ongoing for nearly a year.

There's more, but this isn't about me. It's about: T-A-X-I Have I mentioned that I live in GREEN BAY, WI? I mean, sure, we have the Packers — but it isn't exactly a music hub for anything more than Journey tribute bar bands.

I really can't stress how invaluable TAXI is to people who are willing to put the CRAFT into the ART of songwriting and music production. The "Forwards" section of the [TAXI] forum itself is worth the membership fee. Why?

Figured Out What Elements I Missed...
It's not to brag about Forwards. What I did was hit the [TAXI] Forums after I got "Returns" and found members who received "Forwards" for the same listings. Then I went and LISTENED. I analyzed the differences in our songs. Lyrics. Vocals. Arrangements. Instrumentations. Productions. I re-read the listings, and figured out what elements I missed. And I adjusted accordingly.

Where else can you get that?

The success of members (at least this member) is a TEAM effort. And I am honored to consider TAXI part of my team. It is possible to succeed. To “make it.” To realize our dreams.

Don't quit. Don't settle. Don't lose hope. And stick with TAXI.
GIOLI & ASSIA

Label: Ultra Records
Type of Music: Deep House/Indie-Pop
Management: Ian LaPlace and Zach Partin - Conscious Wanted
Booking: CAA - North & South America / Paradigm Agency - rest of world
Legal: Brian Schall - WRS Lawyers
Publicity: Ashley J. Moore - Heliotype Creative
Web: ggioliandassia.com
A&R: David Waxman - Ultra Records

The world of electronic music has thrown us some amazing visuals in recent years, not least the stunning e-shows taking place within the worlds of Fortnite and Minecraft. Deadmau5’s cube, Gareth Emery’s lasers. Yet it was the natural surroundings of an active volcano in Milazzo, Sicily, in their native Italy, that production/DJ/multi-instrumentalist/songwriting duo Giolì & Assia performed a set last April that has now pulled in 7.8 million Youtube views.

The pair, who are also a couple, found each other at the age of 18 when they were already working hard at their music individually. They quickly clicked.

“I started writing to Gioli, and since that moment five years ago we always speak 24 hours,” says Assia. “We started working together and being in a relationship very quickly. We moved to Milan, and then started this project. Everything we did was together. Being in a relationship and working together is amazing.”

“Being in a relationship and working together is amazing.”

Giolì admits that there are challenges that come with working so closely with your beloved, but overall it’s a wonderful experience.

“It’s difficult sometimes,” she says. “Sometimes we have the same idea, sometimes we don’t. But in general it’s beautiful and nice because you can travel and visit parts of the world with your own partner and share experiences.”

On July 8, it was announced that the duo had signed with Ultra Records, a deal that Giolì says makes complete sense for them.

“We knew that we wanted to find a bigger label, a real partner,” says Giolì. “We met in their studio and it was a nice experience for us. We usually share our tracks on our own label, which is beautiful because you can control everything. But of course to have a bigger team and a partner you can control, visit parts of the world with your own partner and share experiences.”

On the heels of winning an R&B competition in New York at the tender age of 16, Lyn caught the bug and began to dedicate time every day to work on his craft. After a few years, and with both brothers being part of the same Caribbean club scene in Miami, they rubbed shoulders with many in the music business, including manager Ron Telford. Telford became familiar with their sounds while Lyn was writing hit songs for other artists around social and political injustice, and when the duo began

“The positive side of it. We’re excited to start again in September, we hope.” – Brett Callwood

DAVID LYN

Date Signed: June 24, 2020
Label: Spirit Music Group
Type of Music: R&B
Management: Creative Titans
Booking: info@creativetitans.co
Legal: Stephen Luckman - Sheridans Law Firm
Publicity: Roots PR Agency
Web: creativetitans.co/david-lyn.html

Having just released his debut single, “Can’t Breathe,” and with an EP set for release in the next few months, David Lyn’s publishing deal with Spirit Music Group presents a perfect example of what can unfold when you follow your bliss. Lyn’s brother, Grammy-winning producer Izybeats, had just started out in music when he asked Lyn to try out some gear and create sounds for him. Lyn followed the flow, and what began as a hobby led to the recording deal with a commitment for personal releases.

On the heels of winning an R&B competition in New York at the tender age of 16, Lyn caught the bug and began to dedicate time every day to work on his craft. After a few years, and with both brothers being part of the same Caribbean club scene in Miami, they rubbed shoulders with many in the music business, including manager Ron Telford. Telford became familiar with their sounds while Lyn was writing hit songs for other artists around social and political injustice, and when the duo began

“My manager] taught me a lot in the last two years.”

songwriting work for Popeye, who Telford was managing at the time. Izy reached out to Telford, and a management deal soon followed. Six months later, Telford began managing Lyn and masterminded the Spirit Music deal. “A big shout out to my management [at] Creative Titans,” Lyn says, “and to my manager, Ron Telford. He was amazing with it and really taught me a lot in the last two years.”

Lyn gives credit for much of his evolution as a writer and artist to those he has met along the way, for example Rick Ross and Flo Rida, who lent inspiration and advice and helped him to understand the business. Lyn also says that some of his self-confidence came from listening to Amaria who helped him believe he could make it, and that Betty Wright was instrumental in the development of his vocal skills.

When asked what he loved about songwriting, Lyn replied, “You may be feeling angry, but if you go and scream in someone’s face, they might not hear how you really feel. But if you put that same anger on a beat and you find a way to let them feel your emotion, [you can] let them really hear you.” – Andrea Beenham
having amassed 100 million Spotify streams via tracks imprinted with his lyrical style, it is absurd to deny British-born singer Karl Michael’s songwriting gift. Perhaps it was inevitable that a deal with powerhouse publishing group Primary Wave would eventually occur. One day, the company suggested he travel to Nashville to co-write with Dallas Wilson, another talented songwriter attached to Riser House Publishing. Besides discovering another effective writing partner, Michael was entranced by Music City, prompting him to move there.

Naturally, Wilson played Riser House Records the duo’s inspired creations. One song in particular, “Highs And The Lows,” acted as a tipping point: “Okay, we have to meet this guy,” blurted Brandon Perdue, Michael’s A&R, after hearing the tune. Although Riser House has historically focused on country, Michael’s talent convinced them to sign the pop star that previously competed on the U.K.’s iteration of The Voice. Perdue insists Michael’s television appearance didn’t influence their interest one way or the other.

“This is the best label I’ve been with. They believe in me and I believe in them.”

Despite Michael’s reticence toward becoming an artist, a meeting was arranged. “They tied me in a chair and beat me until I said yes,” jokes the crooner, whose unwaivering persistence brought him out of poverty. To solidify the deal, Michael was flown to Turlock, CA, where his vocal majesty and writing chops impressed label chairman Matt Swanson. His third signing, Riser House has been Michael’s smoothest. “This is the best label I’ve been with,” he raves. “I love every person there. They believe in me and I believe in them.” Besides constant contact with Perdue, Michael appreciates the confidence generated by the sense he’s found a place of trust. “They’re not going to stab me in the back,” attests the former construction worker. “They’re just a good bunch of people that want to put music out.”

“Beautiful Creature,” Michael’s ode to unconditional love, is presently available for your swooning pleasure. Expect a full-length offering to surface sometime soon. – Andy Kaufmann

KARL MICHAEL

Date Signed: May 2020
Label: Riser House Records
Type of Music: Pop
Booking: N/A
Legal: N/A
Publicity: Rebecca Shapiro, rshapiro@shorefire.com
Web: itskarl michael.com
A&R: Brandon Perdue - Riser House Entertainment, Brandon@riserhouse.com

LUNA13

Date Signed: June 30, 2020
Label: COP International
Band Members: Lilith Bathory, Dr. Luna (Doc)
Type of Music: Deathtronica; Black/Bass/Metal
Management: Christian Petke - COP International, Christian@COPInt.com
Booking: Christian@COPInt.com
Legal: Christian@COPInt.com
Publicity: Selena Fragassi, Selena@FR-PR.net
Web: LUNA13.net
A&R: John Fryer - COP International

Sometimes it isn’t sending along a YouTube clip or demo to a label that can get your band signed, or rubbing elbows with music execs at parties, or going viral on social media. In the case of “deathtronica” band LUNA13, for example, it was reaching out to a like-minded band and letting karma take care of the rest.

The Los Angeles black/bass/metal duo of producer Dr. Luna and visual artist Lilith Bathory were set to tour the West Coast and needed some companions to join them. They reached out to Suicide Queen, an industrial-metal quartet from Oakland who jumped onboard even though LUNA13—formerly on Cleopatra Records—hadn’t offered a buy-in. Word got back to COP International, Suicide Queen’s label, and pieces started falling into place for LUNA13’s next phase.

“One thing excited me about LUNA13.”

“One thing excited me about LUNA13,” COP International founder Christian Petke says. “[One.] I could not wrap my head around the fact that everything is synth-based. They are so crazy heavy and I hear/feel the bass and the guitar. [Two.] I like that they have a clear visual identity. [And three.] We had a couple of really great conversations around music, politics and life, and we just clicked.”

Doc, whose affections range from anti-Christian bands to the Prodigy to the Black Lives Matter movement, revealed his own motive for signing to COP: “We have a built-in fanbase, but needed more of a push from a label. We felt like just a little more promotion might be good for us.”

Petke says he is confident his label can deliver on Doc’s wishes. “COP International is a much smaller organization than Cleopatra is, which allows us to have much more intimate relationships with the bands on the label,” he says. “It’s more of a ‘boutique’ experience. This can be a very attractive quality when an artist looks not just for a great label, but also for a sense of community.”

The parties negotiated for a week in June and, the following month, COP International announced both the signing of LUNA13 and plans for the Nov. 13 release of its new, yet-untitled record. Petke and Doc disclosed that the band and label will split profits equally as part of the deal.

“We’re one of the darkest bass projects on the planet,” Doc says. “We are a very unusual-sounding project ... but COP is in that mindset as well.” – Kurt Orzech
**Deadline for IAMA Awards**

The deadline is fast approaching for the 17th Annual IAMA (International Acoustic Music Awards). IAMA promotes excellence in Acoustic Music performance and artistry, it is geared toward today's best up-and-coming music acts. Acoustic artists in various genres can gain exciting radio and web exposure through this competition. Win a Top Prize of U.S. $11,000 worth of prizes. The deadline to enter is Nov. 6. For more information, go to iamaconcerts.com.

**Alfa: World Music Winner for Lennon Contest**

Congratulations are in order for Philippine-born L.A.-based folk-pop songwriter Alfa, for winning the Grand Prize in the 2020 John Lennon Songwriting Contest (Session 1 – World). The song is titled “Aindahaw” and Alfa includes verses sung in the Visayan language, one of many spoken in the Philippines and the ancestral language of her grandparents. Phelia Benigan is the co-writer on the track.

To match her songs, Alfa has a series of videos, “Bean Song (My Solace)” features a lyric video love letter to LA; “Fools Gold” features an adorable cast of elementary school students, and “Bare Feet,” shot on a cell phone, portrays her amidst the furniture at an IKEA store in Burbank, CA. The corresponding video for “Aindahaw” was shot in the Angeles National Forest. Alfa was recently featured on the PBS show Songs at the Center, performing “Round and Round.”

**LVCFT: Songs of Ghostly Grandeur**

LVCFT is a trio of Grammy-winning songwriter-producers: Peter Wade, Evan Bogart, and MNDR, who have worked with artists like Jennifer Lopez, Beyoncé, and Charli XCX—and are all obsessed with Halloween. The spooky-ob-essed hitmakers felt there was a serious void in current horror pop music and decided to create some new ghoulish gems.

The first track and video is a remake of the classic “Spooky Scary Skeletons.” Additionally, the song has been hand-picked to be the theme for Freeform’s beloved annual 31 Nights of Halloween.

LVCFT put out their debut album last year. The Sequel, released this month, features 15 new tracks and guest appearances from Uffie (Uffie The Vampire Slayer), Bonnie McKee (Evil McQueen), ZZ Ward (ZZycho Ward), Morgan McMichaels (Morgan McMyKill Myers), Sarah Hudson (Olivia Demon Spawn) and Har Mar Superstar (Scar Mar Superscare). Additionally, iconic horror legends of TV and film, Bruce Campbell (Evil Dead) and John Kassir (The Cryptkeeper), have joined the creepy collective.

**NSAI, Martin and CMT Present Song Contest**

The 21st Annual NSAI Song Contest presented by Martin Guitars and Strings and CMT is open. The Grand Prize includes: $5,000 cash, a mentor session with the ACM - Academy of Country Music 2020 New Female Artist of the Year, Tenille Townes, and hit songwriters Ross Golan and Joe London of the podcast Am I the Writer? , a Martin Guitar Prize Package, a one-year single-song contract with Anthem Entertainment Group and much more.

The Lyric-Only Prize includes: $2,000 cash, a mentor session with Grammy Award-Winning Songwriter Brett James, a Martin Guitar Prize Package and more. The contest is open to amateur songwriters only. All genres of music are accepted and encouraged.

**Myths and Mystique: Hidden History of Music Row**

Written by Elizabeth Elkins and Vanessa Olivarrez, better known as the all-country singer-songwriter duo Granville Automatic, as well as professional historian, museum consultant, and writer Brian Allison, Hidden History of Music Row digs into the creators and legends that made these avenues and alley world-famous. The book is new from Arcadia Publishing & The History Press.

**Dolly Honored by BMI**

BMI has awarded Dolly Parton with several of their coveted “Million-Air” certificates, which recognize songs that have reached over one million broadcast performances. Most notably, her mega hit “I Will Always Love You” logged a staggering 10 million performances to date, ranking it in the top 30 of BMI’s most-performed songs of all time.

**Kara DioGuardi: Songs to Spirit**

Spirit Music Group has acquired the publishing catalog of Grammy-nominated songwriter Kara DioGuardi. The agreement encompasses a large portion of DioGuardi’s back catalogue. Among the songs included in the deal are the hits “Sober” by P!NK, “Heartbeat Song” by Kelly Clarkson and “Undo It” by Carrie Underwood.

**Justin Townes Earle: A Passing**

Singer-songwriter Justin Townes Earle has died. Named by his father Steve Earle for friend and idol Townes Van Zandt, Justin released eight albums and was honored twice at the Americana Music awards, including for his best-known song, “Harlem River Blues.” He was 38.
Tweedy Pens New Tome
Jeff Tweedy of Wilco will publish his new book, How to Write One Song, Oct. 13 via Dutton. The new book, which follows up his 2019 memoir, Let’s Go (So We Can Get Back), promises to reveal the “behind-the-scenes process, and the joy he gets from making something new.” How to Write One Song contains actionable and practical songwriting tips, including tips on overcoming self-defeating dialog, building a creative habit, language techniques to get out of a writing comfort zone, and easy recording methods.

Tweedy, 52, has released 18 albums in his career, including four with Uncle Tupelo and 11 with Wilco. His most recent album was April 2019’s Warner, featuring son Spencer Tweedy.

TAXI Road Rally Virtual
TAXI has been doing livestreams for more than 10 years, and the organization is planning to bring that expertise to bear in the form of a Virtual Road Rally for 2020. The organization will be streaming live sessions with an interactive chat room from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. from Friday, Nov. 6 – Sunday, Nov. 8, the experience presents three full days of actionable information designed to help you create the right kind of music, record and produce it, and then pitch it, sign deals for it, and ultimately earn income.

The Rally will begin with a Keynote Interview with Steven Pressfield, the best-selling author of The War of Art, Do The Work, and Turning Pro. TAXI promises to deliver a first-class event with the quality of content members have enjoyed for the last 23 Road Rallies. To join TAXI visit taxi.com.

Yosemite Songwriting Retreat
Yosemite Songwriting Retreat celebrates the craft of songwriting and the art of performing original songs. Their mission is to support songwriters of all skill levels and genres, create an inspiring and supportive community and provide a safe space where individuals can express themselves through music.

Yosemite chooses instructors that are not only great musicians but also gifted educators. These individuals bring diverse skills and perspectives to teach practical skills through stimulating curriculum.

Previous instructors include Eliza Gilkyson, Laurie Lewis, Peter Rowan, Terri Roche and Joe Craven. Anyone 18 years old and over may participate. Previous experience with songwriting is welcome but not necessary.

This year the event will be online from Fri., Oct. 9 to Sun., Oct. 11. The instructors kick off with a concert on the first evening. Zoom-based classes, one-on-one mentor sessions and a Song Salon, where writers receive constructive feedback and support, chats, and open mic sessions afford plenty of opportunities to hear and share music and inspiration.

Visit yosemite-songwriting.com for entry info.

Chris Pierce Says “Amen”
Modern soul man Chris Pierce has released eight independent albums worldwide, and his song “We Can Always Come Back To This,” featured on the hit TV series This Is Us, was nominated for honors by The Guild of Music Supervisors and the Jerry Goldsmith Awards. “Amen,” new from his side project with Sunny War – War & Pierce, enriches his deep catalog.

Thomas Rhett to Warner Chappell
Multi-platinum artist Thomas Rhett has signed an exclusive worldwide publishing deal with Warner Chappell Music Nashville (WCM), the music publishing arm of Warner Music Group. The ACM Awards Male Artist of The Year has landed an astounding 15 No. 1s, while his most recent single “Beer Can’t Fix” marks his ninth consecutive No. 1, breaking the Billboard Country Airplay Chart record for most consecutive chart-toppers.

FINNEAS: Melody Matters in New Track
Singer-songwriter and Song Biz profile subject FINNEAS (aka Finneas O’Connell), Grammy Award-winning Producer of the Year, has released “What They’ll Say About Us.” The song, with a captivatingly simple video, was inspired by the Black Lives Matter movement and the life of Broadway performer Nick Cordero, who died in July from COVID-19. FINNEAS is currently working on collaborations for the next release from his sister, superstar Billie Eilish.
SONGWRITER PROFILE

Dan Penn
New Songs from a Master Craftsman

With classics like “Dark End of the Street” (James Carr); “Do Right Woman” (Aretha Franklin); “The Letter” (The Box Tops), and “I’m Your Puppet” (James and Bobby Purify), among hundreds of songs in an historic catalog, Dan Penn is a towering figure in songwriting.

With Living on Mercy, his first solo release since 1994, Penn is also the artist. “I’ve always been in the background, and I like that,” he says. “But I’m still a singer, and I like to go out and sing some. Nobody’s coming to the studios these days, anyhow.”

The title track traverses the magical crossroads where R&B and gospel intersect with country music. “It’s still the best,” Penn confirms. “Lyrics, melodies and maybe a little groove of funk.” The horn-infused “Edge of Love” stirs up a Memphis sound stew. “I Do” echoes classic country, while “Down on Music Row” is a cautionary tale about chasing success in modern day Nashville. Penn knows it’s a tough town. “Maybe the toughest. You can’t just walk through the doors. They don’t need you. They don’t want you. It doesn’t matter how good your songs are.”

Penn’s co-writers on the new project include Wayne Carson, Spooner Oldham, Gary Nicholson, Carson Whitsett, Will McFarlane, Bucky Lindsey, Buzz Cason, and the Cate Brothers. In both Penn’s classic hits and his latest songs, themes, titles and essence are conveyed within the first lines of the lyrics. “Me and Rick Hall (record producer and owner of FAME Studios in Muscle Shoals, AL), used to come up here to Nashville and pitch songs to Chet Atkins and Owen Bradley, who were the big producers. We’d have demos on seven-inch reels. They’d play a little bit and go on to the next one. I started thinking it had to be because the strong stuff wasn’t on the front. I started pushing it up, and lo and behold, I started getting cuts.”

His first cut, “Is a Bluebird Blue,” was recorded by Conway Twitty in 1960 when Penn was still in his teens. “I was into music as a kid from the church,” Penn recollects. “My daddy led the singing, and my momma would play the piano. I’d sit in the front row and holler until I could read, and then I sang with them. The Conway song opened doors, but it took me another five years to get another big hit. I almost gave it up.”

Vernon, AL, Penn’s hometown, is 85 miles from Muscle Shoals, an unlikely recording capital where everyone from The Allman Brothers to the Rolling Stones cut hits. Moving to Memphis, Penn joined forces with co-writer Spooner Oldham and producer Chips Moman at American Studios, home to a string of pop classics.

“Do Right Woman” was barely complete when producer Jerry Wexler played the song for Aretha Franklin. Penn remembers writing the song’s bridge in a little closet and singing the demo. The first time he heard the completed track was in the control room at Atlantic Records in New York. “It floored me. Aretha had pulled it together. I think it’s the best record she ever made. She had the power.”

Penn credits songwriter and artist Arthur Alexander with teaching him the importance of simplicity in songwriting. “Arthur didn’t need a guitar. He could write the song, pounding on a car dashboard, singing a cappella. He showed us you don’t have to dig so deep, just be simple. And it’s hard sometimes. I’m not a simple person.”

Compelling bridges are a Penn trademark. “A bridge relieves you,” he notes. He is not a fan of choruses. “Choruses get old. I like two verses, a bridge, a third verse, and then out. You can do all of your damage right there.”

Living in Alabama in the summer and Nashville in the winter keeps Penn on the move. Heading toward his 80th year, he keeps doing what he’s been doing since he was a teenager, writing songs and singing for the people. “Sometimes I go out and play gigs with just me and my guitar. Some people tell me they come to my gigs just for the stories,” he considers. “I guess I do tell a pretty mean story.”

Contact Cary Baker, Conqueroo, cary@conqueroo.com
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- Robert Earl Keen

"Evoking comparisons to the shapeshifting brilliance of Kate Bush and the confessional pop sensibilities of Tori Amos, Jesse Lynn Madera bestows great Fortunes on the listener."
- American Songwriter

Jesse Lynn Madera
JesseLynnMadera.com

(photo by Tim Rice)
DROPS

Other Music, a documentary on the renowned former NYC record store of the same name, has been released. Before closing in 2016, Other Music was a fixture in the city’s early 2000s indie music scene and helped launch the careers of many independent stars, including Vampire Weekend, Animal Collective, Interpol, Yeah Yeah Yeahs, Sharon Van Etten, The Rapture and TV On The Radio. Rising rent prices ultimately forced the store to close its doors. COVID-19 prevented the film’s theatrical run that was scheduled for April 2020, but it is available digitally. The filmmakers partnered with over 200 temporarily shuttered record stores and theaters on a Virtual Cinema release, which raised over $25,000 for those places. For more information, contact Daniel Gill at daniel@forcefieldpr.com.

Pink Floyd’s Delicate Sound of Thunder is coming to cinemas around the world for a one-night only event on Oct. 15. Filmed at Long Island’s Nassau Coliseum over five nights in 1988 during the legendary English band’s tour for the multi-platinum A Momentary Lapse of Reason, the live concert film was directed by Wayne Isham and received a Grammy nomination. The sound was completely remixed from the original multitrack tapes by longtime Pink Floyd engineer Andy Jackson and Pink Floyd’s own David Gilmour with assistance from Damon Iddins. Local screenings can be found at DelicateSoundOfThunder.com, and more details can be found by contacting doug.wright@ldcommunications.co.uk.

David Byrne’s American Utopia, directed by Academy Award and Emmy-winner Spike Lee, will be available on HBO and to stream on HBO Max starting Oct. 17. Talking Heads frontman David Byrne is joined by 11 musicians, singers and dancers from around the world in this experimental theatrical concert film, which is based on the title of Byrne’s seventh studio album and was recorded during its late 2019 and early 2020 run at Broadway’s Hudson Theatre in New York. The show was played to sold-out, record-breaking audiences. Contact Cecile.Cross-Plummer@hbo.com for more information.

Columbia Records and Netflix have collaborated to release the soundtrack from the new musical series Julie and The Phantoms, which dropped Sept. 10 along with the series’ Season 1 debut. It was executive produced by Emmy and DGA Award-winning director and choreographer Kenny Ortega (High School Musical) and features 15 original tracks from the show including the single “Edge of Great.” The series is about a high schooler regaining her passion and inspiration for music after her mom’s death and forming a band with three ghostly musicians. Contact winnie.lam@sonymusic.com for more information.

The Golden Globe-nominated 1972 doc film I Am a Dancer, which tells the story of Rudolph Nureyev, one of the greatest ballet dancers of his generation, was restored and re-released in September on Blu-ray, DVD and in digital formats. Offering a glimpse into the dedicated training and techniques behind Nureyev’s work, the film features prima ballerinas Margot Fonteyn, Carla Fracci, Lynn Seymour and Deanne Bergsma, and includes excerpts from his performances from such classical productions as La Sylphide and The Sleeping Beauty. Contact Michael Krause at mkrause@foundrycomm.com for further details.

Somebody Up There Likes Me, releasing on DVD and Blu-ray Oct. 9 and directed by Mike Figgis, is the first in-depth film biography of iconic musician, artist and Rolling Stone Ronnie Wood and his 50-year career. In addition to contemporary and archive footage of Wood both on and offstage, the documentary features brand new interviews with Rolling Stone bandmates Mick Jagger, Keith Richards and Charlie Watts, Wood’s Faces bandmate Rod Stewart, his wife Sally Wood, singer Imelda May and artist Damien Hirst. For further details, contact Carol Kaye at carol@kayosproductions.com.
Opps
The submission window for the 2021 National Music Theater Conference is Oct. 15-30. Due to COVID-19, only digital submissions will be accepted this year. There are no specific requirements for pieces submitted. For details on entering your work, visit theoneill.org/mntc.

The Annual Utah Music Awards, which recognizes new and undiscovered musicians around the world, is now accepting entries for the event on July 17, 2021. For information and guidelines on submitting videos, visit filmfreeway.com/UMA.

The Palomar Film Music Workshop, which provides participants an immersive, in-depth study of creating original music for film, is now accepting applications for its summer 2021 program in June. For details about the program and how to apply, visit palomarworkshops.com.

For More Career Opportunities, check out musicconnection.com daily. And sign up for MC’s Weekly Bulletin newsletter.

Props
This past summer marked the premiere of the Black Women Creators Conference, a virtual conference that featured exclusive workshops to elevate their creative careers. The August event featured presentations from more than 20 top black women in various professions to discuss creative career building, film and television production, the music industry, journalism, modeling, fashion design, entrepreneurship, business development, and other topics. For details, visit blackwomencreators.com.

In August, ADAM Audio debuted a free online series for all-women musicians and producers looking to take their musical creativity and career to the next level. Women in Music: Start to Finish is a six-part live stream series via Facebook of interactive workshops and panel discussions on the process of creating and releasing a music track, featuring advice and tips from professional women in the industry. Session topics include mixing, mastering, A&R and management, marketing and social media, and navigating the music business as a woman. The series ended in September with special guests including Emmy Award-winning composing duo Wendy Melvoin and Lisa Coleman, as well as singer-songwriter Lachi and live show designer Laura Escudé. For more, check out facebook.com/Adam-ProAudio/ or contact andre.zeugner@adam-audio.de.

Twenty-three-year-old Sydney Mesher is the first Radio City Rockette with a noticeable physical disability in the world-famous dance organization’s 94-year-history. Mesher was born without a left hand, the result of a rare congenital condition, and her success is an inspiring story. Born and raised in Portland, OR, Mesher grew up loving dance class, which she started before elementary school. Soon she was dancing 25 hours a week with a competition team, training in jazz, tap and ballet. While attending Pace University in New York City, she began auditioning for the Rockettes, and made it to the final round on her first try. Though it took a few tries, Mesher made history last year and joined the Rockettes, renowned for their annual Radio City Christmas Spectacular. Contact agr@andersongrouppr.com.

Grammy Award-winner Aimee Mann released a cover of Leonard Cohen’s “Avalanche” that appears as the title track for HBO’s true-crime docuseries I’ll Be Gone In The Dark, based on a book of the same title written by Michelle McNamara. The author, who passed away in 2016, was married to comedian Patton Oswalt. Mann and her husband Michael Penn are close friends with the couple. “We were completely devastated by her death. I was incredibly moved by Patton’s dedication to getting her book finished and was so happy when he reached out about recording a version of ‘Avalanche’ for the show,” noted Mann. The show’s six episodes are available for streaming on all of HBO’s platforms.

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Polo G Announces New Label
Rapper Polo G announced in September that he is starting his own label in partnership with Columbia Records, named ODA. “The name of my label is ODA, Only Dreamers Achieve Records, because in our communities we are told what we can’t be. I want to send the message that we control our futures and encourage artists to dream big,” the rapper said. The first release, due this year, will be Scorey, a budding talent from Syracuse, NY.

Perez Travels 4,000 Miles to Perform for Healthcare Workers
With music venues closed, musician Franky Perez partnered with Ducati to create Crossing the Great Divide Tour, an eight episode miniseries that documents a 13-day, 4,000+ mile tour on a Ducati Multistrada 1260 S Grand Tour custom fitted with a detachable guitar case. Throughout the trip, Perez performed multiple free outdoor concerts for healthcare workers. Check out the miniseries at ducati.com/us/en/franky-perez-suddenly44-tour.

Indie Radio Station Discovers Chemical Diary
Thanks in part to Music Connection’s recent DIY Spotlight profile on Chemical Diary’s Dean Strickland (aka Roland Numbers), the band has garnered attention from radio station iRockNashville. According to the artist, who recently reunited with his brother, guitarist Dudee, “Our band was notified by Scott Fisher, Program Director, that several of the songs from our latest CD were chosen for airplay on irocknashville.com. The most popular songs played on the station this summer from Chemical Diary’s Equalizer CD, which was recorded at Capitol Studios in Hollywood and reviewed by Music Connection magazine, are ‘Feed The Homeless,’ ‘Emotional Roller Coaster Ride’ and ‘When She Comes Back To Stay.’” Pictured (l-r): Roland Numbers and Dudee.

Jonas Group Publishing Launches in Nashville
Growing talent management and entertainment company Jonas Group Entertainment has announced the launch of its new Nashville, TN-based publishing division, Jonas Group Publishing, with flagship songwriter Terri Jo Box joining founder and CEO Kevin Jonas, Sr. on the roster. Pictured (l-r): Kevin Jonas, Sr. (founder and CEO); Denis Jonas (founder); Terri Jo Box; and Rodger Hodges (artist manager).
Shinedown recently broke the record for the most #1s ever in the 39-year history of the Billboard Mainstream Rock Songs chart, scoring their 16th #1 hit with “Atlas Falls,” a track that offers a message of optimism and faith in humanity amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The song was released as part of an exclusive song and T-shirt bundle for the band’s COVID-19 fundraising effort. More than $300,000 including a $20,000 donation from Shinedown that kicked it off went to humanitarian aid organization Direct Relief.

In an issue presenting profiles of R&B star Gerald Levert and producer Gavin Mackillop (Friends theme), we featured a cover interview (her first) with Alanis Morissette, who had just broken through. Asked why she signed with Madonna’s new label Maverick Recording, she replied: “The last thing I wanted was to signed with a company that had a different perception of me than I did.”

In our feature interview with Japanese-born New Age Music icon Kitaro, he rhapsodized about his early breakthrough as an artist and composer: “With a synthesizer, I could create an ocean, a winter coastline, a summer beach—an entire scene.” Meanwhile, the issue’s Keyboard Roundtable contains interviews with Jools Holland (Squeeze), Chester Thompson (Santana) and Ben Watkins (Juno Reactor).
V2 Poised for a 360 Distribution and After Recording and Performing Half Their Lives, Vittorio and Vincenzo of V2 Ready for the Big Leagues

Three, Fantastic, Un-Released, Ron Nevison Produced Albums Await the Label Who Signs Them

Vittorio and Vincenzo of V² (pronounced V Squared) www.VSquared.rocks have been recording and performing like pros for half of their lives. Legendary rock producer, Ron Nevison (RonNevison.com) discovered Vittorio and Vincenzo at the age of 11. Nevison, who produced rock albums for some of the most iconic bands in the history of Rock N Roll, including Led Zeppelin, The Rolling Stones, The Who, Bad Company, Lynyrd Skynyrd, Heart, KISS, Chicago and others, immediately recognized the most talented 11 year old rockers he had ever witnessed and offered to produce Vittorio and Vincenzo's debut album, We Are V². The boys debut album, We Are V² swept the 24th Annual LA Music Awards in 7 categories including Rock Album of the Year and Rock Single of the Year. Vittorio and Vincenzo's live performance of their original songs, We Are V² and Long Live Rock N Roll made them the youngest artists to ever grace the stage of the LA Music Awards and the only band to ever receive a standing ovation. Their performance that night of Long Live Rock N Roll has over 1.5 million views on YouTube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4V8avNQ0v2E and is recognized as the greatest live rock performance by 11 year olds in the history of Rock N Roll. Several of the singles off the album went on to reach the top of Billboard's Hot Singles Sales Chart.

Following the success of their debut album, while still only 11 years old, Vittorio and Vincenzo cut Studio Album 2 under the production ears of Ron Nevison entitled Pass the Rock N Roll Torch. Studio Album 2 was equally well received with several singles reaching the top of Billboard's Hot Singles Sales Chart and landing them with recognition from DigitalRadioTracker.com as the Breakout Rock Artist of the Year. When not in the studio, V² was performing regularly to standing ovations in Santa Rosa, CA at Rock Star University’s HOUSE OF ROCK, opening for seasoned rock bands, including Blue Oyster Cult, Dokken, LA Guns, Quiet Riot, The Tubes, The Babys, Foghat, Puddle of Mudd, Winger, Stephen Pearcy, Lita Ford, Bret Michaels and others.

At age 12, V² released Studio Album 3, The Beginning, a

Ron Nevison, legendary rock producer, recalls “Having worked with and produced records for some of the biggest Rock N Roll bands and artists in the industry, when I saw Vittorio and Vincenzo perform live at age 11, I was immediately blown away. How could kids this young be so good? When I got them in the studio for the first time, I was even more amazed at their work ethic and talent. As I listened to playbacks I would forget how old they were until I turned around and saw two kids sitting there grinning at me. Wow! They were so well rehearsed, so professional, and so damn good! I didn't know it at the time, but I would go on to work with them almost every year including this year, at age 17.”
compilation of all their original pre-teen songs and followed up the next year at age 13 with another Ron Nevison produced album, Rock N Rods. A combination rock CD and custom car calendar featuring 6 original V² car songs and 7 classic car song covers, with a calendar of the actual cars the songs were written about, Rock N Rods with its calendar was a big hit among car enthusiasts and quickly sold out before Christmas that year.

The next year, Vittorio and Vincenzo suffered a serious setback when their home burned to the ground with all their instruments and music equipment in the massive Santa Rosa fires. The fire also forced the boys to relocate and start high school in an unfamiliar town. Although they lost everything in the fire, they continued to record an album each summer and have three, unreleased, Ron Nevison produced albums ready for a major label 360 Distribution and European Summer Tour deal. The three, unreleased, Ron Nevison produced albums include Rock Show Girl, So Long My Love, and The Originals. Rock Show Girl, which is Studio Album 5 was recorded when Vittorio and Vincenzo were 15 years of age and features an original song as the title track with V² covers of some of the most iconic rock songs about girls. The album was created to showcase the title track and demonstrate the amazing vocal and instrumental talent and range of the boys.

So Long My Love, Studio Album 6 was released when the boys were 16 to showcase the original title track and demonstrate the range, talent and softer side of V² with covers of some of the most iconic rock love songs including Poison's Every Rose Has Its Thorn, Clapton's Wonderful Tonight, The Calling's Wherever You Will Go, Skynyrd's Tuesday's Gone, The Black Crowes' She Talks to Angels, James Taylor's, Fire and Rain, and others.

And just completed, at age 17, Studio album 7, The Originals. Another fabulous V² album is all of Vittorio and Vincenzo's most popular original music, which rose to the top of Billboard's Hot Single Sales Chart, instrumentally and vocally re-recorded with their mature voices, under Ron Nevison's mythical production, plus two, new original songs!

Nevison adds, “Vittorio and Vincenzo are the best kept secret in the industry. No BS. No drama. They step into the studio and record like true rock stars. They step on stage and perform like true rock stars. They will be the next big rock stars for the label that signs them! I know because I have produced records for some of the biggest rock stars. I’m so proud to be a part of Vittorio and Vincenzo’s success. Great young men with great talent.”

As seasoned recording and live performance pros at age 17, Vittorio and Vincenzo of V² are poised for a major label, 360 Distribution and European Summer Tour deal with three, phenomenal, unreleased, Ron Nevison produced albums. Major labels with world-wide distribution channels and European touring packages, who are interested in negotiating a 360 deal with V² can contact V² via email to Anthony@rockstaruniversity.com For more information about Vittorio and Vincenzo go to www.VSquared.rocks. To request copies of their three unreleased CD’s send a letter on your label stationary with a self-addressed, postage paid envelope to PO Box 1780, Windsor, CA 95492.
BRIGHT EYES
Bravely Facing A Whole New World
The last time Bright Eyes released a new studio record, America was only a couple of years into the Obama presidency, Adele had the bestselling album of the year, the Arab Spring was in full swing and Congress was fiercely waging a “War on Women.” Needless to say, a lot has changed in the nine years since then.

But in August, singer-guitarist Conor Oberst, multi-instrumentalist Nate Walcott and guitarist/multi-instrumentalist Mike Mogis dropped *Down in the Weeds, Where the World Once Was*, boldly entering a rapidly changing world that appears headed for Aldous Huxley territory. Today’s climate is especially rough on musicians, who are confined to staying at home amid a raging pandemic, and whose fans are less willing than ever to spend money on music because of severe economic anxieties. Moreover, civil liberties are eroding by the day, likely to the horror of an Omaha band with a long track record of supporting human-rights campaigns.

One might be inclined to think that Oberst and Bright Eyes have returned to vent about the growing number of injustices, help galvanize the masses ahead of November’s election or at least boost spirits while the pandemic, police brutality against Blacks and other catastrophes rage.

The first stanza on *Down in the Weeds*, finds Oberst singing “Got to keep on going like it ain’t the end/ Got to change like your life is depending on it/ It’s a long time coming and we’re taking it in/ What a wild ruse” to kick off “Dance and Sing.”

On the following song, “Just Once in the World,” Oberst croons more timely lyrics: “This world is waving goodbye … So cut a rug, let’s throw a party … Swallow hard and say you’re sorry/ Just admit what you have done.”

What could be even more stunning than Bright Eyes’ return after nearly a decade is that Oberst wrote those lyrics—and in fact the entire new album was made—before the pandemic hit. We recently spoke with Bright Eyes’ three mainstay musicians about their eerily prescient new record, which new Stephen King adaptation two of the band members are scoring, and their reaction to the appearances of two surprise guests on *Down in the Weeds*. 😌
It’s not a bad idea that your music outlives you.

You may look young for your age but your music may not be so lucky. How you archive your music matters. Not just for now but for the now on.

For many artists, their musical assets are the currency for their success. What’s more, a library can harbor cherished, sentimental value, sadly, all unrecoverable once degraded.

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Music Connection: How is quarantine life treating you guys?

Conor Oberst: We’re doing all right. I’ve been doing interviews, hanging with my dog. I’ve learned that there are two kinds of people in the pandemic world: those who are motivated to make and doing things, and those who are not. I’m squarely in the latter category.

Nate Walcott: I’m working on scores for a TV show, making music and film and TV. [Mike and I have] worked on stuff steadily, and we both have families, so it makes us happy to go in with the record coming out. It’s been pretty hectic.

MC: Which TV shows and films are you currently scoring?

Walcott: Mike and I are currently scoring a mini-series for CBS called The Stand, based on the book by Stephen King. We’ve scored three films together over the years, and I’ve scored several on my own.

MC: You also mentioned family life.

Walcott: Yes, what I meant was, Mike and I both have children. I only mentioned that to describe how hectic it’s been this year, what with the shutdowns, the schools being closed, etcetera.

MC: Are you enjoying the press circuit more or less than before the pandemic?

Oberst: It’s never been one of my favorite parts, I’ll say that. This has been a little interesting because you don’t have to leave your house ever …

Mogis: … You’re not supposed to leave your house …

Oberst: … so it’s been easier than some
press tours. But there is some fun in going to New York and Europe and seeing people there. The pandemic has also gotten me out of photo shoots, which I hate.

**Mogis:** A Zoom interview was the most fun we did. It's like an adaptive reality. Since there isn't much social activity anywhere, Zoom interviews are the most active thing I do.

**Oberst:** I don't know if that's true for me—in a way it sounds cliche or self-agrandizing—but everything hits me pretty hard, so it hasn't been helpful to be an artist. I haven't been able to turn all these negative emotions into something productive. Part of me wishes I had some of my friends around. They have mundane jobs, and they sit at their laptops all day and do their things, some mindless tasks.

**Mogis:** I built a [ARC Studios] behind my house, so I don't have to go anywhere. I've been social distancing for the last 20 years!

**MC:** Did Bright Eyes record the whole album in Mike's studio?

**Walcott:** We recorded a batch of songs—everything that Flea plays on, about half of the record—at a studio out here in L.A. called Electro-Vox. We did the orchestra and choir sessions at Capitol Studios (also in L.A.) and recorded another batch of songs at ARC in Omaha.

**MC:** Did you write and/or produce the majority of the new album before the pandemic started?

**Oberst:** We started in April 2018, writing the music and all, and then we went into the studio to record in 2019. So yeah, the songs were all written long before the pandemic. We're no strangers to dystopian apocalyptic ideas. I kinda had an obsession with death as a kid. I was in the right place at the right time, and hit it home.

**Walcott:** We mastered the record at the beginning of February. It was all done after that.

**Oberst:** It might've gotten pushed back a week or two due to the quarantine.

**MC:** You haven't played a show since 2011. How weird will that be when you inevitably perform again? Do you remember the feeling of being onstage?

**Oberst:** It was really disappointing to have the tour pushed back. We had a lot of plans and a big visual element to the show, and we were just really excited.

**Walcott:** I had already started quite a bit of work on re-orchestrating stuff. Rather than travel with a bunch of strings, we'd bring a couple of players and hire other musicians locally in the markets we were playing in. I would have arrangements that we needed for really small venues, and then more for our L.A. show [three dates at the Hollywood Palladium]. The New York show [at Forest Hills Stadium], we were going to have to go as big as possible too. It was quite a turnaround, to have all our plans all out before going on the road.

For this record, we had an orchestra on a handful of songs and a choir. It takes a lot of work to trim that down and still make it sound good. This tour has its own sets of opportunities that needed to be addressed. It's going to be fun to pick up local players for each city, just based on venue size and how many people we can fill onstage. But we leave that to the managers—also, to figure out social distancing.

**Oberst:** We plan to play at earliest next summer. In theory, there will be something going in terms of a vaccine or something. I'm interested in seeing how other bands handle it. I don't have a whole lot of desire to play a big venue anymore.

**MC:** It sounds like you're not exactly a socialite, Conor. Did you really wear a kilt to a date, per the lyrics on “Persona Non Grata”?

**Oberst:** “Persona Non Grata” is an ode to this old friend of mine in New York, Butch Hogan, who's [a photographer who is] pretty controversial. When I first met him, he'd often be wearing a kilt and combat boots and a Moorhead shirt or something like that. It's a flashback to... every year in New York, they have a crazy Hallow-
een parade, everyone goes and marches around, and it’s always kinda crazy, so it is safe in some realities to wear a kilt.

**MC:** What about the song “Mariana Trench”? Have you researched it in depth? What do you think is in there? Will we ever find out?

**Oberst:** I was just trying to express highs and lows [more generally]. Mount Everest versus the Mariana Trench. There isn’t too much more to it than that. But yes, I am fascinated by exploration.

**MC:** What has Bright Eyes done better on this record than any previous record?

“I built [ARC Studios] behind my house, so I don’t have to go anywhere. I’ve been social distancing for the last 20 years!”

**Oberst:** I don’t know what we did best. I think I’ll associate [Down in the Weeds] with this period of time, so unfortunately I’ll remember the pandemic well. But there was a lot of cool [aspects to it]—playing with Flea and Jon Theodore was a different experience, and it’s a reflection of things from me personally in my family life.

**Walcott:** The fonder memories will gear more toward—not that we’re not having fun at this moment—but toward the process of writing. I loved that period of time. I loved that first year of putting together that first batch of music. We went about this record in a slightly different way. We had so much fun in the studio with Jon and Flea. It was so enjoyable: the choir, the orchestra. I feel personally after having been doing more stuff for a while, approaching it on this record, I was able to do it personally with more calm and focus after having so many times in the past where I didn’t approach it with so much calm and focus. We had so much fun playing with these guys.

**MC:** Can you elaborate on how you recorded this album “in a slightly different way”?

**Walcott:** Sure. Conor brought up early on, before we got started, the idea of wanting to write collaboratively. So I would bring in a bunch of ideas to those writing sessions we had in 2018 to show Conor and Mike—little demos I’d made of chord progressions on piano or keyboards, set to a simple drum machine beat or something, and with maybe a couple extra little musical elements—ideas for starting points for verses, choruses etc., with the idea that they would be a little different from Conor’s normal set of go-tos as far as harmonic structure and chords are concerned, but also familiar enough to still feel right for a Bright Eyes record. The goal was to come up with some things with some subtle but unexpected twists here or there in the chords and harmonic structure or feel, in order to inspire some vocal melodies that maybe wouldn’t have occurred otherwise.

I’d show them a handful of ideas and we’d maybe settle on a few that Conor gravitated towards the most melodically, and he’d workshop vocal melodies on his own, and then we’d move chords around to fit his ideas, chop things up here and there a little, etc. So there would be a process of back and forth and trial and error involved with making the songs that way. Examples of songs that came out of this approach were “Pan and Broom,” “Forced Convalescence” and “To Death’s Heart.”

Other times Conor would bring in demos of songs that were fairly fully formed but I’d rework them harmonically—i.e. change the chords a bit—to kind of take them in a slightly different direction or give them a different feel. “Dance and Sing” is an example of a song with which we used that approach.

Those were two different new approaches that we used. We had worked like that a little bit in the past, but not nearly to the extent that we did on this record. And we wanted the record to feel balanced, so there were also some songs that Conor brought in that we pretty much left alone as far as the structure/chords/melodies are concerned, and Mike and I just focused on the production and arrangement.

**MC:** More specifically, how was it playing with Jon Theodore and Flea?

**Oberst:** It was amazing. On paper, it doesn’t make tons of sense—they’re coming from more of a modern-rock world, but they’re such fantastic musicians that they can play in any style and are really open-hearted and open-minded. They came in and wanted to do whatever was best for the songs. They come from different sensibilities than us.

**Walcott:** It’s a weird twist, particularly with Flea. He and I come from the same background in the music we love—jazz—and he’s a trumpet player, so we’ve been really connected by that. When he came into the studio, we had a harmony rooted in jazz music. He understands things on a pretty deep level.

I just toured with the Red Hot Chili Peppers starting in 2016; that was the main thing that helped me get aboard. I had mentioned to him in 2018 … I said, I was stepping back and asked him if he’d play with us.

**MC:** On which songs do Flea and Jon Theodore perform? I assume they play the trumpet and drums, respectively.

**Walcott:** Jon plays drums on every song and Flea plays bass (not trumpet—that’s me playing trumpet on the solos on “Comet” and “Stairwell,” and the orchestra trumpet players on the orchestra stuff) on the following: “Dance and Sing,” “Mariana Trench,” “One and Done,” “Stairwell Song,” “Forced Convalescence,” “To Death’s Heart” and “Comet Song.”

**Mogis:** It felt like they were conscious decisions to employ some instrumentation choices that were touchstones to other records we had in the past that we maybe intentionally did to give [this record] an essence of nostalgia. The hammer dulcimer or arrangements we streamlined with more melodies, like on Lifted or lo-fi, that called back to Fevers. You learn new tricks and learn to mix a certain way and distill things down a bit more creatively. Those elements are new to the production of this record.

**Oberst:** We did a location record, like a lot of our older stuff, which I like.

**Walcott:** I really wanted to make the melodies on a handful of songs really clear, and then go in an opposite direction with a psych song like “One and Done.”

Contact Chloe Walsh, chloew@grandstandhq.com
Oberst released his first solo album, Water, at the tender age of 14 on Lumberjack Records, which would eventually become Saddle Creek. Only 300 copies of the 1993 cassette release were made.

Oberst dated Winona Ryder in the early 2000s, though the fling didn’t last too long.

In 2002, Bright Eyes released a Christmas album with proceeds benefiting the Nebraska AIDS project. Songs from it appeared in the horror movie Krampus and on The O.C.

Bright Eyes joined Bruce Springsteen, Dixie Chicks, James Taylor and R.E.M. to perform at the Detroit stop of 2004’s Vote for Change tour, which encouraged concert attendees to vote then-President George W. Bush out of office.

In 2005, Rolling Stone referred to Oberst as both “Rock’s Boy Genius” and “the indie-rock Bob Dylan.”

Bright Eyes were billed seventh on the second day of Coachella 2004, third on the day they played at Coachella 2005 and fourth on the day they played at Coachella 2011.

In September 2007, Bright Eyes played their first two shows with an orchestra, and did so in style, with the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the famed Hollywood Bowl.

In July 2010, Bright Eyes and a handful of other Saddle Creek bands performed a concert benefitting American Civil Liberties Union Nebraska and its efforts to prevent a draconian municipal law prohibiting the hiring or rental of properties to undocumented workers.

Deceased hip-hop star Mac Miller released a cover of Bright Eyes’ “First Day of My Life” on Soundcloud in 2012. The track has 1.29 million plays on the online platform, while the original version issued through Bright Eyes’ official Soundcloud account has only 85,700 plays.

3,475 days elapsed between the release of Bright Eyes’ The People’s Key in 2011 and Down in the Weeds in August.

While relatively shy in Music Connection’s interview, Mogis is a multi-hyphenate who has produced, engineered and/or played various instruments on records by more than 30 other artists ranging from Rilo Kiley to Pete Yorn.
Mastering on Lockdown
By Rob Putnam
Have online mastering tools improved to the point that they represent a challenge to mastering engineers? Recently Steve Vai mentioned that he sometimes uses the online mastering tool LANDR.

If your mix sounds great, those avenues are a possibility, so in that way it is a threat. Where people will run into problems is if that their mix doesn’t sound great and they use an online mastering service. They’ll wonder why it doesn’t sound incredible.

When you begin to work on a track, is your first instinct about it usually correct?
The key to mastering is that it’s the last 10 percent. If it’s not done right, then everything else was done for nothing. Good mastering could mean doing nothing. The term that I use is ‘reliability, replayability and reliability.’ Is the vibe relatable? Is it something that people want to play over and over again? A song needs to sound the same in every place someone might listen to.

Do you master for vinyl? If so, what are the unique challenges?
I have and love the way that it sounds. The vinyl place I use—Morphius Records in Baltimore—does a bit of mastering of their own, which is a skill. I’ve always wanted to sit down and watch what they do.

How do you help clients communicate what they want from you?
Phone conversations are cool but as we work, I like feedback. The message platform on SoundBetter.com, for example, is well organized. It’s easier than a phone call because I don’t have to refresh my memory.

If mix engineers send you stems, what are the common problems with them— for example, misaligned tracks?
Usually I ask for stems when the parts need attention. For example, the vocal might have an opposite problem in the same frequency range as the instrumental. So I use them a lot for repair. If a mix lacks something with it all being one thing, that’s when I need to separate it. The worse it is, the more I need to separate it.

What big changes have been seen in the field in the past year or so?
A lot of times mix engineers try to master for themselves with limited success. People constantly try to release technology to eliminate the mastering engineer. You just have to keep doing what you do and get better.

What are the best ways to find new clients? SoundBetter, Fiverr, Upwork and other online services. People read your reviews there, so treat every job as important as the next. That leads to word-of-mouth.

What are untapped sources of income for mastering engineers? For example, is there much money to be made with remasters? Podcasts. I don’t know that they’re getting mastered all of the time. I’d guess that the successful ones are or have some close attention paid to them.

What’s the best path for those that aspire to become mastering engineers? Is a formal education preferred over a practical one?
If you really want to be a mastering engineer, skip school and go to the top-notch mastering houses like Sterling or Bernie Grundman and intern; get coffee. You need a properly tuned room. For me, it was a lot of reading and trial and error.

Has the field of mastering improved in terms of sound in recent years or is there still pressure for music to be loud?
There’s always pressure to make music loud. We’re outside of the loudness wars and are no longer confined by the CD limitations. The revenue-flow has changed because the replayability is where the money is.

What big changes do you foresee for mastering?
Everything will go to phone apps and we’ll all be taken out of position. The business is technology-based. In the meantime, clients come to me because they need better mastering than the automated stuff. We need to get creative and build our skill sets.

Nate Middleman
Company: Above Ground Studios
Clientele: DJ Honda, Tate Kobang, Aniya O’re
Contact: abovegroundstudios.com

Nate Middleman is a 10-year veteran of the Baltimore mastering scene. He began his career as a recording engineer, but when he discovered mastering he knew he’d found his passion. Much of what he’s learned was shown to him by Sterling Sound’s late mastering engineer Tom Coyne. Bob Katz’s book Mastering Audio: The Art and the Science also became his bible and it built on what he’d learned at New York’s Institute of Audio Research. His studio name, Above Ground Studios, is inspired by his process of introducing underground artists into the mainstream—platinum-certified rapper Shordie Shordie, for example.

How has the lockdown affected your business?
My facility has multiple studios and I had to shut down the one where we record. I can still do projects that people send online. I kind of operate the place by myself [now] so it’s a little lonely. But I also produce, so I’ve been able to dive into things.

Are the changes initiated by the lockdown here to stay?
For music production, it will tip the scale even more towards doing it yourself. Recently I sent a recording template to someone I work with. They’re able to do their thing and that will be good for the industry because tracks will still need to be mastered.

Patricia Sullivan
Company: Bernie Grundman Mastering
Clientele: John Williams, Blake Mills, Mac Miller
Contact: berniegrundmanmastering.com

Patricia Sullivan dove into music when she first heard an Eddie Van Halen guitar solo. Almost immediately, she went out and acquired an ix. In the early ’90s she enrolled in the without Grove School of Music and then landed a runner gig at A&M Studios (now The Jim Henson Company Lot). There, Sullivan began to focus on mastering and—after an informal A-B test of her mastering ears—was taken under the wings of chief engineer Dave Collins and engineer Alan Yoshida. Soon thereafter, she became Collins’ assistant and, in 1999, moved to top-line mastering house Bernie Grundman Mastering.

How has the lockdown affected your business?
Things have slowed down a bit. I do a lot of movie soundtracks, so when all production halted, they didn’t know when they’d release movies so everything kind of stopped. But I’ve had some video games and other things come through so I’ve been able to work.

Are the changes initiated by the lockdown here to stay?
I had around 40 percent of sessions that were attended pre-COVID, so I didn’t have a lot of clients coming in anyway. If they want to err on the side of caution, it’ll probably be a little longer until people are comfortable being in an enclosed space with a stranger. As far as recording at home, musicians want to play with other people, so that will continue. That’s where the magic happens.

If mix engineers send you stems, what are the common problems with them?
I don’t recommend stems. I prefer a two-track mix, because I’ve found that something like an instrumental and a vocal can work okay. If something is mixed with a compressor or an EQ across the bus, sometimes it doesn’t have that same kind of gel that a stereo mix would have.

What big changes have been seen in the field in the past year or so?
The automated mastering services, even though at the moment they’re just starting to be used by people who can’t afford a real engineer. It’s a cheap way for them to get stuff mastered. There’s also immersive audio, where people are mixing just audio without being married to a movie Dolby’s Atmos Mastering Suite, so there are some who master for that. That’s a specialization and you have to have a room that’s set up for it.

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What are the best ways to find new clients?
I keep tabs on social media, but sometimes the majors have an in-house person or someone who is their go-to. Certainly it’s worth a phone call. Also, look at the newer bands and offer your services. It’s more about finding the people you want to work with rather than any new technologies.

Are present-day artists more technically savvy or less? Moreover, is it important that they be up on tech?
If an artist likes to dabble in the studio, then great: do that. The tools we have now give artists flexibility. It is good to have people on your team to help you get the sound you want. But these days artists are probably more technically savvy just because they’ve grown up with technology.

Have online mastering tools improved to the point that they represent a challenge to mastering engineers?
It’s smart to be aware of them. Many years ago there was a program that came into the studio called Sound Tools. It was slow, sounded awful and everyone laughed. Now it’s Pro Tools and it’s the major DAW in every studio. So, I can beat online mastering, but I can’t be stupid and keep my head in the sand because it’s here. Maybe 10 years from now it’ll be a major source.

How do you help clients communicate what they want from you?
I just let them talk. They don’t need to say “Take off a dB at twelve k.” I simply need them to talk about how it feels; what they want to hear more or less of. If I need clarification, then I ask for it.

What’s the best path for those who aspire to become mastering engineers?
It’s self-awareness. Some people want to learn at a school, so they should go there. There are others who simply jump in: they watch videos, they try and fail. These days, especially, if you don’t want to go to school, then don’t. Just dive in. Intern and be able to offer something like working for free or offering to clean the studio.

Has the field of mastering improved in terms of sound in recent years or is there still pressure for music to be loud?
There’s a lot more flexibility now. Radio isn’t as big as it used to be. Now it’s Spotify, YouTube and Apple. There isn’t a standard that people shoot for anymore and the consumer can play things back differently now with any kind of normalizing function.

What big changes do you foresee for mastering?
I don’t try to foresee things. I learn what’s happening now and educate myself about it so I can serve my clients.

Jim DeMain
Company: Yes Mastering Studio
Clientele: Jimmy Buffett, Billy Ray Cyrus, Elton John
Contact: yesmasterstudios.com

Jim DeMain is entirely self-taught, both as a recording/mix engineer and as a mastering pro. He began work in Akron, OH, in a barn that had been converted into a studio and soon saw the wisdom of assembling his own room. As more clients came to him, he realized that he enjoyed mastering more than recording, especially when cutting tracks led to all-night sessions. He moved to Cleveland and ultimately to Nashville where he established his studio nearly 20 years ago with the help of sound veteran Carl Tatz, who designs and builds such spaces.

How has the lockdown affected your business?
There was a lot of stuff in the pipeline when the pandemic hit and at first it was fine. But most of my clients are performing musicians and they wouldn’t be able to perform. I braced myself. But I’m actually busier now and I work half a day and then another engineer comes in and works the second half.

Are the changes initiated by the lockdown here to stay?
I might keep splitting days at my studio. The music business will change back about as quickly as it can because so much of it depends on artists performing in front of other people. But I don’t count on anything changing for at least a year.

If mix engineers send you stems, what are the common problems with them?
I discourage clients from sending stems, because then I’m mixing their record. But when I get them, I haven’t had trouble. My problem is that I don’t have all of the plug-ins that [mix engineers] use.

What big changes have seen in the field in the past year or so?
Everybody is starting to see that you have to do things differently for the streaming world than for CDs or vinyl. At first, people would simply send the CD mixes. I had a case where a band wanted something mastered loud and I told them it would be too hot for Spotify and so forth. So I did it and a few days after the release, I got a panicked call from the producer because it sounded distorted on Spotify.

What are the best ways to find new clients?
Ninety percent of my clients come to me by word-of-mouth. The best way to get new business is to do every project as best you can so that your clients are happy and will pass along your name.

What are untapped sources of income for mastering engineers?
Two or three times I’ve done mastering for film work. I master different elements such as fixing the vocals or making it solid so it doesn’t move all around. I also tell kids not to get locked into one thing. You may have to do live sound or sound for a TV show.

Are present-day artists more technically savvy or less? Moreover, is it important that they be up on tech?
A huge producer said to me once—and I agree—that most of the people who are technically savvy are usually not the best artists. The best ones often can’t figure out how to use Facebook. The most important thing in any art form is that you’re able to make the art. It’s still all about the song.

Have online mastering tools improved to the point that they represent a challenge to mastering engineers?
That’s more a case of being in the eye of the beholder. In short, I don’t trust unsupervised algorithms.

When you begin to work on a track, is your first instinct about it usually correct?
It usually is. When I’ve gone back and second-guessed [some earlier work], I’ve always found that my first pass was best because I was totally in the moment. First instincts are incredibly important.

Do you master for vinyl? If so, what are the unique challenges?
We don’t have a lacquer cutter here, so when we prep our master, yes, we have to do different stuff because there are things that will be different in the physical world than in the digital. The volume doesn’t need to be crushed, because it’ll never be in a playlist up against another band. You don’t want or have to limit it nearly as much. It’s important to have some of those dynamics.

How do you help clients communicate what they want from you?
Now that most of the records I work on are self-released or indie, part of what I do is master, but also educate clients.

What’s the best path for those who aspire to become mastering engineers? Is a formal education preferred over a practical one?
A formal education doesn’t matter anymore. I learned completely on my own. It doesn’t hurt to have a basic level of understanding, but it’s important to know that when you come out of those schools, you’re really still at zero. You may have to build your own [studio] and do it from there. You have to pile firewood before you can build a big fire.

Has the field of mastering improved in terms of sound in recent years or is there still pressure for music to be loud?
It seemed like it peaked about a year ago. But with things like Spotify, you have to do it a little lower. Now about 25 percent of my clients ask me to turn it down a bit and put back some of the dynamics—more in the indie world, perhaps because of vinyl.

What big changes do you foresee for mastering?
I wonder if mastering will still be a job because of things like LANDR. As things move more toward the streaming world, we’ll be able to utilize the higher sample rates and bit depths for better quality.

I don't count on anything changing for at least a year.
Andrew Mendelson studied music at Ithaca College and began his foray into mastering when he landed an internship with indie audiophile label Telarc, which specializes in classical and jazz records. There he learned to listen for audio artifacts and to be mindful of changes caused by varying humidity levels in concert halls where recordings were made. He spent some time at Sony Music Studios, New York, returned to Telarc and in 2002 was invited to work at Georgetown Masters in Nashville. In 2004 he bought the studio and now masters the majority of Billboard top country singles and records.

How has the lockdown affected your business?
For a while, I came in by myself and had my staff take systems home. It was inefficient, but we were able to keep moving. Now we’re back, in separate rooms and we’ve always worked staggered shifts. There are rarely more than three people here at any given time.

Are the changes initiated by the lockdown here to stay?
Those things were already in place; some artists already had home studios. Sometimes they record demos at home and those became the basis for the master. But that depends on the style of music. There may not be more of it, but certainly there won’t be any less.

If mix engineers send you stems, what are the common problems with them?
I strongly discourage mastering from stems unless there’s a specific reason to do so. Often they won’t sum back the same as if you’d printed a two-channel mix. It also gives you a reason to not finish mixing. The mix isn’t your final vision. In my opinion, enhancing that final mix is the true essence of mastering. Also, it costs more to master from stems. One place where I commonly use them is for radio or a cappella versions of songs.

What big changes have been seen in the field in the past year or so?
People have focused on LUFS [loudness units full scale] and are now trying to game that system. In my opinion, this is often counterproductive.

What are the best ways to find new clients?
The best way to find new clients is to deliver good-sounding masters. Also, be easy to get along with. There are probably a lot of talented people out there who aren’t working because they’re difficult to get along with.

What are untapped sources of income for mastering engineers? For example, is there much money to be made with remasters?
Next week I’ll master some music for a podcast and I used to do a lot of work for concert videos. Many people are doing vinyl-cutting, archiving and restoration. We’ve also done some basic forensic work for law firms that need interview tapes cleaned up.

Are present-day artists more technically savvy or less? Is it important that they be up on tech?
More artists have their own studios and seem to be more technically savvy. But for many artists, tech isn’t their thing. If they have a stronger technical knowledge, it may help them to communicate better. If they can’t, it’s my job to figure it out.

Have online mastering tools improved to the point that they represent a challenge to mastering engineers?
So far, it hasn’t been an issue for us, businesswise. While they can be useful in certain situations, those seem to be the types of projects that people wouldn’t have been sending out to a high-end mastering studio in the first place.

When you begin to work on a track, is your first instinct about it usually correct?
My first instinct just starts me in a direction. It may lead me down other paths I want to explore. It’s often more of a journey than simply reacting to an initial impression.

Do you master for vinyl? If so, what are the unique challenges?
I don’t cut lacquers here. Often it’s only in extreme cases that I’ll do an alternate digital EQ for vinyl. Other than that, usually it’s just a matter of making sure there’s headroom on the file, dividing it into the proper side splits and QC-ing.

How do you help clients communicate what they want from you?
When I’m doing a full album or EP at once, I like to do the first few songs and send them to the client to establish the vision for the album before I do the whole thing.

What’s the best path for those who aspire to become mastering engineers? Is a formal education preferred over a practical one?
A lot of studios will only accept interns from formal education programs, for legal reasons. If you’re interested in internships, it may be a requirement.

The formal route worked well for me and I’m a strong proponent of the mentorship route. There are certainly plusses and minuses to both approaches.

Has the field of mastering improved in terms of sound in recent years or is there still pressure for music to be loud?
The proportion of people who are concerned about loudness has decreased. Some artists still prefer to master loud. We cater to our clients on a case-by-case basis.

What big changes do you foresee for mastering?
There will be a bigger emphasis on efficiency and quicker turnarounds.

Joe Zook
Company: Mixed by Joe Zook
Clientele: A.J.R., OneRepublic, Katy Perry
Contact: joezook.net

Joe Zook broke into the business as a runner at legendary audio abode, Conway Recording Studios. He now mixes as a consultant.

How important is it for a mixer to be mindful of mastering issues and considerations?
It’s very important. There’s a tendency to put mastering plug-ins on in the mix stage. When you do that, you handcuff yourself and it’s harder to make it better.

Do you ever vary mixes for different mastering engineers?
Yes. Sometimes I’ll email the A&R guy and ask who’s going to master and then make different moves based on the answer.

Do you ever send mastering engineers different files? For example, do you sometimes send stems?
I never send stems. I’ll sometimes send separate files that are louder—sort of a pre-mastering loudness reference that I’ll give to clients for A-B testing. That’s usually because of however the rough mix has been given to me and however people have been listening to it.

How do you deal with strong personalities in a band when he/she insists on something that is detrimental to a mix? I deal with it diplomatically and with compassion. Nine times out of 10, their choice is completely emotional. I judge that to be an excellent place to come from. If they’re adamant, then that’s a fight I’m happy to lose because I want them to feel strongly about it.

A number of online music players employ loudness normalization. Are you mindful of this when mixing? I’m a big fan of loudness normalization. It’s changed the game and opened things, artistically. It allows you to be competitive without having to make dynamic range choices that you would have felt pressured to conform to in the CD days.

Is automated mastering a serious challenge to mastering engineers? Do you ever use it?
It’s not even on my radar. I’ve played around with it. But I put in so much time to fix the master that there isn’t much point to automation. It’s getting better, though.
Vittorio and Vincenzo are 17-year-old brothers from Santa Rosa, CA. Both began playing guitar and drums, respectively, at age 7 and have not looked back since. As the duo V² (V Squared), they cut their musical teeth at age 11, performing regularly in their hometown at Rock Star University's House of Rock. It was there that the twins caught the attention of legendary producer Ron Nevison. Nevison, whose credits include Led Zeppelin, The Who, KISS, Heart, The Rolling Stones, etc., was immediately taken by their talent and took the young lads under his wing.

Working with Nevison, V² have amassed six independent recordings. While each audio document is a milestone in its own right, the current focus is on their unreleased 2019-2020 output. Those albums in order are Rock Show Girl, So Long My Love and The Originals. Each album has a conceptual and musically thematic component to it.

Rock Show Girl was released when Vittorio and Vincenzo were just 15 years old. The overall theme is girls and it includes an impressive treasure trove of iconic songs and rock classics. It kicks off with the title track. The V² original basically espouses the joys of performing on stage and making an impression on the ladies in the audience. It’s a timeless message peppered with catchy hooks and great harmonies. That sets the pace for the lion’s share of choice covers. It’s a murderer’s row of rock classics that draw heavily from their influences, yet offer the listener a window into their unique musical personalities. “Long Live Rock” opens the disc and plays like a band bio. A clever semi-classical arrangement blended with muscular guitars and shifting tempos tells the story of the boys’ journey to finding themselves and embracing rock & roll. “Let Me Go” follows and is a good natured slice of youthful rebellion. Eddy “Summertime Blues” Cochran as well as contemporaries like Brian Setzer could certainly appreciate this one. “Rock Show Girl” returns and gets a slight remix, with a punchier chorus and hooks as big as a Cadillac. “Insidious” is one of their newest singles and shows a darker side of the band. There is a real development in terms of lyrical content and vocal delivery here. Their inclusion of a track like “The First Time I Ever Tried” shows their affinity and love for the blues.

Again, as with “Insidious,” their song “Never Meant for You” shows a giant leap in this duo’s songwriting. Vittorio’s solos really flow and the smooth mix of acoustic and electric guitars place this liberally at adult contemporary or alternative radio. “Guitar Man” is a rocker, pure and simple! Vittorio’s slick legato phrasing, matched with Vincenzo’s mid-section drum breaks, certainly make this an album standout.

They highlight the latter part of the album with more auto-biographical material, like “Girls Stars Money Cars” and “I Like Doing This the Best.” But, perhaps their mission statement could be best summarized by the song “Pass Rock ‘n Roll Torch.” In it they pay tribute to their musical heroes, with the emphatic no nonsense chorus, “We’ll play it loud, we’ll make you proud.”

V² seems to capture that independent rock & roll spirit that a magazine like Music Connection was founded upon. The group has come a long way since their initial “New Music Critique” in 2017. Vittorio and Vincenzo have certainly done their homework. These three releases reveal two burgeoning artists looking to forge a new chapter in the direction of modern rock. See VSquared.rocks
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TASCAM’s Model 12 Multitrack Recorder

TASCAM’s Model 12 multitrack recorder is the latest in a series of hybrid mixers sharing many of the core features with the larger TASCAM Model 16 and 24. The TASCAM Model 12 is designed to be a self-contained recording environment, allowing it to be used for tracking, mixing, mastering, podcasting, as a DAW controller and much more.

TASCAM is the professional audio division of TEAC Corporation. Arguably, TASCAM invented the home recording market when, back in 1979, it released the TEAC Model 144. While it is easy to be taken for granted now, when it was released, the TEAC Model 144 was a truly revolutionary product giving singers songwriters and musicians the ability for the first time to record, overdub and mix their musical ideas to a standard cassette tape.

Over the years, TASCAM has evolved the original portable studio concept—the “Portastudio”—to incorporate features and technological advances that continued to make the product relevant. The original concept, however, a hands-on portable recorder that has the look and feel of a traditional recording console, has not changed. It is interesting to note that the prices for a vintage Portastudio often exceed the retail cost of the TASCAM Model 12.

Fast forward to today, the TASCAM Model 12 provides a flexible recording tool that allows you record up to 10 tracks simultaneously and then mix, master and export a final product. As the unit saves files to .WAV files it is easy to copy your raw files to other computer-based DAW platforms such as ProTools or Logic for editing. It is also easy to import loops, beats and other audio content for songwriting. The first 10 of the 12 available tracks are assignable to one of three modes—Live, PC or Multitrack Recording—while tracks 11 And 12 are the Master outs.

The TASCAM Model 12 allows you to record onto SD and SDHC cards as well as SDXC cards up to 512 GB. The TASCAM Model 12 is a great tool for capturing band practices, performances, live recording and tracking sessions. You can use the Model 12 as a Playback engine or simply as a live mixer for mixing and capturing live performances. It also has a storage mode that makes it easy to transfer files to your computer desktop for file storage or importing into other software programs.

The TASCAM Model 12 can record at 44.1k / 48k Hz. The Model 12 features TASCAM’s Ultra HD Mic Preamps. The preamps have a maximum of +22DB of headroom. Its mixing surface features sweepable EQ on all 12 channels. Each channel features Low Cut, Hi Shelving Mid Peaking and Low Shelving. The unit features a Master EQ section with High Shelving, Mid Peaking and Low Shelving controls. Each channel also has available Compression. The Aux sends can be used to route signal to the FX engine, or to the Aux 1 & 2 outputs on the TASCAM Model 12. Next to the faders are buttons for routing signal to either Main or Sub outputs, or both simultaneously. There are Inserts on channels one and two. The TASCAM Model 12 features a built-in Metronome, two Headphone outputs with individual volume controls. The TASCAM Model 12 has a dedicated TAP Tempo function allowing you to monitor and adjust the recording tempo in live and recording situations. It also has Bluetooth capability that provides for a variety of playback options. The TASCAM Model 12 connects to your computer via a USB Type C Connector. While the TASCAM Model 12 has the basic capability to control many basic recording functions (including fader, Pan, Solo, and Record), it does not have the more advanced MIDI Machine Control functionality required to control more advanced features on your DAW.

TASCAM recently released a firmware update for the Model 12, which adds VAMP looping functions, auto calculates tempo sets in and out points. This VAMP feature allows you to easily set a start and end point and loop playback selected audio content on the TASCAM Model 12. You can, for example, rehearse a selected track before you record the part. The TASCAM Model 12 is compatible with the TASCAM RF 1 Footswitch for controlling VAMP looping and punching in and out. TASCAM has invested a significant amount of resources in the podcasting market. The TASCAM Model 12 features mix-minus and smartphone inputs. The basic concept of a mix-minus is to input multiple sources of audio into an audio mixer (your microphone, phone messages, Skype, etc.) then send that audio back out to Skype, minus (without) the Skype caller’s voice.

The TASCAM Model 12 shines as a standalone recorder that brings a lot of the original Portastudio functionality dialed in for the 21st century. It is easy to use and is a fun, refreshing change from “all in the box” computer-based recording while retaining tight computer integration and the ability to control the basic functions of your DAW if you want it to. It’s a portable, flexible and cost-effective recording tool adaptable for a wide variety of home and professional recording environments.

The TASCAM Model 12 has a MAP price of $599.00

Find out more at tascam.com/us
Bill Smith – United Archiving

Bill Smith recalls the moment when he read the liner notes on one of his father's Herb Alpert & the Tijuana Brass records. It's the day he realized that he was destined to become a recording engineer. He didn't imagine then that he'd go on to work for 36 years with legends such as Quincy Jones, Barbra Streisand and Paul McCartney. He's also labored alongside famed Beatles engineer Geoff Emerick. But that was all in the first phase of his career.

At the dawn of 2020 he embarked on the second phase when he became Chief Archiving Engineer with United Archiving at the historic United Recording Studios.

The company launched its audio archiving service in 2016. Since Smith joined, he's expanded its gear collection so that now virtually no stored audio is beyond his reach. In short, clients deliver tapes and other archives—many of which have suffered various damages—and it's Smith's job to extract the content and move it into a digital format or sometimes even do an analog-to-analog transfer. "Basically, we convert older, obsolete formats into a high-resolution broadcast wave format—24-bit, 96k or 192k with Pro Tools as the front end," he explains. "Old analog tapes can have all sorts of encoding and noise reduction too, which complicates things."

Once the art of archiving is explored in depth, the nuances and intricacies begin to surface. Stored audio comes through the door in conditions that range from nearly pristine to something approaching dust. But there's yet to be a source that Smith has been unable to salvage. "There's always something you can do," he asserts. "With enough love and care—sometimes you have to unspool [tape] inch-by-inch to clean and re-lubricate it—you can get that stuff back, even in the worst conditions. Digital tape is a different animal. It's not recorded in the same way as analog. If there's a dropout in the chorus, sometimes you can grab it from an earlier or later one. There might also be a safety tape [from which] you can copy the missing piece. Digital is far less forgiving than analog."

All tape will degrade over time. One of the ways archivists reclaim damaged media is to bake it. United does so with its lab-grade Yamato oven. Smith finds that once a tape is baked, there's a small window in which the audio can be captured before it starts to degrade again, so he does it within 24 hours. "There's also a limit to how many times a single reel can be baked before the law of diminishing returns kicks in. Even after they've been in the oven, the job isn't always over. "Some tapes will still shed some oxide because of their age," he observes. The majority of times, tapes from the '60s are in better shape than tapes from the '70s and '80s. That's because they were made before companies began to monkey around with the formulations. That's what gave us the whole sticky-shed syndrome. Tapes from the '60s inherently don't suffer from the issues of more modern ones unless they've been stored horribly."

While the countless hardware and cabling requirements to access ancient audio are often vexing, they're not Smith's biggest challenge. Rather, maintaining the vast array of necessary vintage gear is what looms large. "You're dealing with machines that are sometimes 40 years old," he explains. "Like the [1980] Mitsubishi X-80, for example. They only made two hundred of them and the only spare parts you're going to find are if you can get a second machine and gut it. So you have to maintain the machines at all times. One of United's great advantages is that we've got Mike Guerra on staff. He's one of the best techs in L.A."

United Recording Studios was established as United Recording Corp. in 1957 by noted engineer Bill Putnam. In 1985, Allen Sides purchased the building along with Putnam's Western Recorders next door at 6000 Sunset Blvd, which then became Cello—which then became United Recording in 2014.

According to Smith, several things set United apart from other services. "You're dealing with an archiving department that's attached to one of the more famous studios in the world with a reputation for professionalism and integrity."

See unitedrecordingstudios.com/archiving
The New Art
Balancing Human and Synth in Music Creation

It's a great time to be alive for indie music-makers! There are many of us, maybe including you, who are creating good music out there, armed with nothing but our own ingenuity and the few dollars in our shallow pockets. But what's the best way to make music, real or programmed? I like to do a combination of these two because it’s cost effective and gives me more creative control as a producer.

Use Your Strengths as the Anchor
If you're a good guitar player, go with it. If you're a good beat-maker or a wizard with patches or cool synths, go with that as the anchor to your music. For me, I'm a classically trained singer and piano player, so that's where I stay the most "real" in my recordings.

Keyboard Tracks
For keys, I import midi from my full-size Yamaha digital piano. I like playing a real-feeling piano with weighted keys and a pedal, because, as all piano players know, you just have to. If you're used to playing a real piano, you can't just play some little bouncy-key keyboard. Unless, that is, you're Stevie Wonder, and then you can get magic out of anything with keys.

The coolest thing about using midi for piano parts is that I can go in and alter the notes if I need to. Let's say I was a little early or late on some notes, or I want to bring down the volume of a note that sticks out. I just zoom in and make those little tweaks in my DAW. After working like this, I would hate to record straight audio and give up this tasty little cheat. Does tweaking a naturally-played midi make me less of a musician? That depends on who's answering the question.

Drums and Percussion
One of my favorite things is to walk the line between real and programmed with percussion. On my last full album, Love, many of the tracks were recorded with a real drummer playing an electronic kit. The kit sent midi straight into my DAW, connected by a standard USB. The drum tracks on my songs “Hey Mr. Sunshine,” “Top of the Mountain,” “Time for a Change” and more were all recorded this way. I was lucky enough to know a good drummer (my brother Jim) who owns an e-kit. The beauty of this method is that you, as the producer, have the midi. You can assign any virtual kit you want to it, move hits to fix a timing fluke, or modify it to experiment with variations.

Guitar and Bass
I keep guitars real for the most part. For bass, I've used both real players and programmed.

Vocals
On to the vocals. Yes, I've worked hard at my singing, taking lessons, pushing myself, and training my ear. Am I perfect? No way. A caveat of a trained ear is that you hear, in fine detail, how much you're off pitch, not only as you listen back, but even as it's coming out of your mouth. I've developed a technique with vocals that works for my singer-songwriter style: My finished vocal tracks are created with a combination of careful editing and a delicate touch of pitch correction.

Depending on the song, for some vocal tracks, I just edit together a decent comp from several takes and re-sung sections, and then I need to. Let's say I was a little early or late on some notes, or I want to bring down the volume of a note that sticks out. I just zoom on some notes, or I want to bring down the volume of a note that sticks out. I just zoom in and make those little tweaks in my DAW. After working like this, I would hate to record straight audio and give up this tasty little cheat. Does tweaking a naturally-played midi make me less of a musician? That depends on who's answering the question.

But is this an ego contest? Or is it trying to get the best product in a reasonable amount of time, and accepting my own limitations?

Real bass players are my preference, but sometimes the budget is tight. For example, in my simple ukulele track “Alive and Free,” the uke is real, but I programmed the bass from a keyboard. In an opposite example, on my song “Always OK,” the guitar is programmed (Native Instruments’ Strummed Acoustic) and the bass is a real player. “Always OK” is a reggae-pop song, so I used a real bass player to stay true to the reggae genre, which puts importance on the bass line. The result is that these tracks blend real and programmed, and didn’t break the bank.

At the end of the day, who says you can’t have your cake and eat it too? Of course you can—you’re an artist. You can do whatever you want, and craft your own masterpieces with your own unique mix of real and programmed music.

ANGELA PREDHOMME’s music has been heard by millions through television, film, radio and streaming. A singer-songwriter, her songs have been featured in the popular Hallmark movie Christmas on Honeysuckle Lane, Lifetime’s hit show Dance Moms, commercials for ING Bank and Fiat, and more. Predhomme reached no. 1 on the Euro Indie Music Chart this year and has been marked as “one to watch” by music journalists.
THE INDIE ARTIST
“Music Connection consistently serves up some of the most helpful music articles, and has helped me find several songwriting opportunities that I wouldn’t have known about otherwise. Regardless the stage of your career, Music Connection is an amazing resource.”
– Aprilann

THE EDUCATOR
“Music Connection magazine is my barometer for staying on top of industry trends. My students receive invaluable feedback through the New Music Critiques and Reviews. Also, the national Directories are a great resource. The latest issue of Music Connection magazine has a permanent home in my teaching studio!”
– Chris Sampson  Vice Dean for Contemporary Music, USC Thornton School of Music

THE GRAMMY WINNER
“Music Connection is consistently the best source for how to make records and sustain a career in music.”
– Greg Wells  producer-songwriter-musician (Katy Perry, Panic!, Adele)

THE MUSIC PROMOTER
“Advertising with Music Connection has been a great experience that not only gave us great exposure, but allowed us the opportunity to get involved in contests and other fun events. Highly recommended.”
– David Avery  Powderfinger Promotions

THE INDIE BAND
“Music Connection bridges the gap between indie needs and industry resources, way before it was trendy to be indie. ... Their desire to cater to all of levels of music folks within the trade has helped them create their own lane and maintain the respect of our peers. A must-read to stay in the know.”
– Dessy Di Lauro & Ric’key Pageot  Parlor Social

THE STUDIO OWNER
“I find valuable information in every issue. I constantly refer engineers seeking employment to the annual Recording Studio issue, which has the most complete and comprehensive list of U.S. studios that you will find anywhere. And when I am asked for advice by a kid just starting out, I always tell them ‘Well the first thing you should do is check out Music Connection.’”
– Kathleen Wirt  Owner, 4th Street Recording

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Andreas Vollenweider

Quiet Places
MIG Music Germany
Producer: Andreas Vollenweider

Thirty-three years after Down to the Moon cemented his legend as master at fusing new age, jazz and world music, Swiss electroacoustic harpist Andreas Vollenweider launches his next phase with Quiet Places—an intimate, melodically eloquent, rhythmically eclectic and classically tinged set of exotic dances and introspective meditations. Creating dreamy, lushly textured soundscapes with his ensemble of pianist Isabel Gehweiler and drummer Walter Keizer, Vollenweider expounds musically on the themes of his upcoming first novel Reflection of Venus and sets the stage for the next two albums in a conceptual trilogy. – Jonathan Widran

Deep Purple

Whoosh!
ear Music
Producer: Bob Ezrin

When the brand is Deep Purple, you’ve got nothing to prove. Or do you? When the needle drops on the album’s opener “Throw My Bones” you’d be hard pressed to think they’re just phoning it in. On this, their 21st studio album, DP returns with a global point of view and an urgent musical vision. “Drop the Weapon” has a strong anti-hate message and “We’re All the Same in the Dark” diffuses all barriers of human interaction. These are new progressive hard rock classics for a band that undeniably defined the genre. They’ve retained their signature sound, yet remain remarkably fresh. – Eric Harabadian

Songhoy Blues

Optimisme
Fat Possum
Producer: Matt Sweeney

Refugees who’ve survived the imposition of Sharia law upon their native Mali, this gloriously combustible quartet simmers with spiritual intensity. Outcasts both political and social, a specter of trauma swims subtly beneath their sound. A shockingly infectious mélange of rock and blues filtered through the sunny perspective of Afropop, the lovable quartet persistently radiates humanistic positivity. With Optimisme, their joyous expression of experience transcends earthly personal statement and rises to the realm of akashic. – Andy Kaufmann

The Stray Cats

Rocked This Town: From L.A. to London
Surfdog Records/BMG
Producers: The Stray Cats

The Stray Cats kept the candles burning on their 40th anniversary cake. Last year they toured the world to support 40, the trio’s first new album of original music in 26 years. This live release is a testament to the fact that they’ve lost none of their edge. It is 23 tracks of brilliant performances that flow with ease. Originals Setzer, Rocker and Phantom deliver every nuance while spitting fire on the stage. “Gene and Eddie” features clever montages to rockabilly legends and Setzer cuts loose on Dick Dale’s “Misirlou.” “Stray Cat Strut” also ages well. – Eric Harabadian

Ricky Reed

The Room
Nice Life
Producer: Ricky Reed

While Reed is the artist on this project, the master producer magnanimously spotlights a stellar cast who collaborated remotely. “Us (How Sweet It Was)” featuring Jim James and duendita, glides on a Great American Song Book melody, whereas “Real Magic” with Terrace Martin & St. Panther, is aloft on sensual warmth. John-Robert, with pop purveyor Alessia Cara, adds his disarming falsetto to “Fav Boy.” Leon Bridges and Kiana Ledé make it all “Better,” and Godfather666’s tender voice is disarmingly spellbinding on “No Future.” In troubled times, Reed casts a comforting aura illuminated in immediacy and cerebral sensitivity. – Dan Kimpel

Nas

King’s Disease
Mass Appeal
Producers: Hit-Boy, Various

Nas releases his 13th studio album, King’s Disease, which is predominantly produced by Hit-Boy, a stellar, hitmaking producer. Lyrically Nas comes across as a young, wise, matured emcee, with more years of greatness to experience. From “Car 85,” to “Full Circle,” to “The Cure,” Nas personifies an artist whose goal in life is to steer his audience into critical thinking and to living a meaningful life. Nas continues to get better with time. He shows his fans the meaning of being a King and the steps one needs to avoid dwelling with the Disease. – Adam Seyum

Songhoy Blues

Optimisme
Fat Possum
Producer: Matt Sweeney

Soft Machine

Live at the Baked Potato
Moonjune Records
Producer: Theo Travis

To the band’s credit the program is a thoughtful cross-section of early fan favorites, including “Hazard Profile” and “Out Bloody-Rageous.” Guitarist John Etheridge, bassist Roy Babbington, drummer John Marshall and woodwind-keyboardist Theo Travis simply shine. – Eric Harabadian

Antonio Adolfo

BruMa: Celebrating Milton Nascimento
AAM Music
Producer: Antonio Adolfo

One of Brazil’s most prolific and influential artists and performers, pianist-composer Antonio Adolfo follows Samba Jazz Alley, a tribute to early bossa nova, with this similarly illuminating, divinely melodic and exotically grooving tribute. Adolfo’s thoughtful re-imaginings pay personal, intimate homage to the lush melodies, transcendent harmonies and swinging percussive energy of his friend, colleague and important influence. Beyond shining a spotlight on this powerful musical kinship, there is a unique social consciousness reflected in the title, a portmanteau referring to cities that have suffered recent environmental disasters. – Jonathan Widran

To be considered for review in the Album Reviews section, you must have a record deal with a major label or an independent label with an established distributor. If you do not, please see our New Music Critiques section.
Whether you have a vault filled with priceless masters or a handful of DATs in your attic, our staff of professional archival engineers can expertly transfer your tape-based audio into high resolution, archive-ready digital files.

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www.audioarchivingservices.com
info@audioarchivingservices.com
**Giggie Surge**  
**Contact:** finleysteven3@gmail.com  
**Web:** giggiesurge.com  
**Seeking:** Booking  
**Style:** Hip-Hop/Rap  

Rapper Giggie Surge really impresses us with multiple facets of his music, from the naturally effortless tone of his voice and flow to the continuously clever wordplay. The most interesting trait of his tracks is the content: a sort of swaggy delivery of pimp-themed, at times grotesque, bars and hooks. If your lyrical tastes require a filter, he might not be for you, but if you’re used to pleasantly grimacing at the content of a bar, you’ll certainly be able to appreciate what Giggie brings to the table. He chooses solid beats for the most part, the best in our opinion being "BND," with a slight miss in "DON’T KNOW HOW." That being said, Giggie has a clear knack for rapping and a really unique approach content-wise.

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**Score:** 7.8

**SixFoxWhiskey**  
**Contact:** sixfoxwhiskey@gmail.com  
**Web:** sixfoxwhiskey.com  
**Seeking:** Management, Label, Film/TV  
**Style:** Funk Jazz Rock  

A bold, funky framework keeps this Boston quintet well on track, showing off the band’s tightness as a unit, as well as each individual’s talent. That’s particularly true of the sax player, who provides a scorching showcase on each song. "Betty" is the band’s best, a smooth ‘n breezy song about a wayward female’s life sung in a voice that has an ideally boyish quality. Next, the sax is crazy good on "Common Ground" as it works its way through a funky and interesting arrangement. Not to be outdone, the group’s guitarist and drummer get to display their formidable chops on the shimmering breakdown section of “Crossroads.” SixFoxWhiskey are likely a complete knock-out when they take to a live stage.

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**Score:** 8.0

**8dz dram@x**  
**Contact:** 8dz.dramatx@gmail.com  
**Web:** songwhip.com/8dz-dramx  
**Seeking:** Film/TV, Label  
**Style:** Synthwave  

Synthwave band 8dz dram@x has a high-concept vision, especially the leadoff song “Who Are You?”—a question that is asked by a robotic, dispassionate female voice and it sets the tone for a dark, dystopian soundscape filled with swirling synthesizers, frenetic drumming and a pummeling beat. That same beat propels the “The Circle Chase,” a so-so instrumental. Sandwiched in between is the outlier, “Lost VHS”; though intro’d by the female narrator once again, the song is a dead ringer for an ‘80s Brit synth-pop tune, right down to the lead vocal. Overall, this band is kind of intriguing, but the listener expects the unexpected of a future project. Instead, what we’re hearing seems pretty familiar.

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**Score:** 6.8

**Jesse Lynn Madera**  
**Contact:** kate@richlynngroup.com  
**Web:** jesselynnmadera.com  
**Seeking:** Label, Film/TV, Booking  
**Style:** Contemporary, Americana  

What strikes you right away about Jesse Lynn Madera is the skill she’s invested in crafting arrangements that give her songs a “chamber pop” aura. They are, by turns, elegant and unpredictable. “Country” features a sad, solemn voice along with a piano-and-strings section that underscores lyrics which dwell on the struggle to persevere after a breakup. The song’s sudden shift to a bolder energy nicely conveys an ultimate message of breakthrough deliverance. Elsewhere, on the coolly textured “72HVN” and the theatrical “Dante,” the luxurious arrangements tend to overpower the artist’s voice. Perhaps Madera might consider re-mixing her recordings to better emphasize her lead vocals?

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**Score:** 7.4

**Kendra Black**  
**Contact:** beatrice@empktpr.com  
**Web:** kendrablackmusic.com  
**Seeking:** Film/TV, Distribution  
**Style:** Electro Pop  

These well-recorded songs (which tend to lean more to pop than electro) are loaded with the hallmarks of DJ-singer Kendra Black’s chosen electro-pop genre. On “Smoke Signals,” she sets a heavenly swirl of synthesizers atop a beat-heavy foundation that supports vocals which are heavily autotuned. Despite periodic injections of electro-pop that help to keep things sounding fresh—Black’s stereotypical pop voice on this song results in something that could be described as “diet Ke$ha.” Meanwhile, “Rude” and “Air Pack Jet” use her signature sarcasm to target brash, egomaniacal scenery. As catchy as these songs sometimes are, their charms wear thin far too soon.

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**Score:** 7.0

**Electric Aloha**  
**Contact:** mikehalland@gmail.com  
**Web:** electricaloha.com  
**Seeking:** Film/TV  
**Style:** Alternative Rock/Rap  

Guitarist Mike Halland’s project Electric Aloha delivers impressive musicianship (all the guitar solos) along with topical higher-consciousness rap-rock vocals that alternate with memorable choruses in a sweet and savory pop-rock style. Yes, it’s familiar—albeit times (on “Say Goodbye”) we’re reminded of Linkin Park, maybe even Rage. Most impressively, these songs make an emphatic plea for us all to do better. “We all gotta take a stand” the singer pleads in “Rise Up.” And the inspirational, anti-racist “Stand Up” has lyrics with terrific, eloquent turns of phrase. And did we say the guitar solos are alwaysrippin’? While the rap-rock formula has been done before, Electric Aloha gives it new life.

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**Score:** 8.0
There is absolutely no charge for a New Music Critique. We critique recordings that have yet to connect with a label or distributor.

overcoming depression. Reed Waddle’s well of reverb in an inspirational story about enveloping the song in a wide, mysterious panorama raise it up a notch on “Castle Wall,” arranged and recorded, Waddle and company raise it up a notch on “Castle Wall,” enveloping the song in a wide, mysterious well of reverb in an inspirational story about overcoming depression. Reed Waddle’s harmonic, uplifting vibes are hard to resist. All songs are performed and captured in All songs are performed and captured in

SCORE: 7.4

Lyric Dubee
Contact: revrock@lyricdubee.com
Web: lyric.dubee.com
Seeking: Booking, Film/TV
Style: Rock/Pop/Alternative
Singer-guitarist Lyric Dubee is a Toronto based artist who, though just 21, has put out 5 albums. Not surprisingly, his new songs—full of classic rock ingredients—are altogether solid and crafty. And Dubee’s voice is a smooth, likable tenor that is recorded and mixed with skill. Above all, he’s got a terrific band that is polished and powerful. “Back Home” is a cool blues- rocker infused with super-soul harmonica. Going for a more modern sound is “All This Time,” though it did not make a big impression on us. However, “Shoulda Went Home,” featuring a kickass guitar solo, gets our vote for the artist’s best song. Still, it’s the songwriting area that needs the most attention. The band itself is a thrill to hear.

SCORE: 7.8

Julian Frampton Band
Contact: julian.frampton@gmail.com
Web: julianframptonband.com
Seeking: Management, Booking
Style: Alternative Rock
Singer-guitarist Julian Frampton leads a modern blues-rock five-piece that shows exceptional polish. His voice, though it lacks a distinctive tone, is capable of a grittiness that he summons on “Quicksand,” a smoldering tale of romantic strife that is spiced with a fiery guitar solo and moments of falsetto. On the organ-infused “Baby” John hits the advances of a shallow, superficial lover. The song’s middle section is well thought out and again features fluid fretwork, while the briskly paced “Phrases” showcases the entire band’s ability to rock out. All in all, fans with an ear for modern, guitar-centric blues-rock will find the Julian Frampton Band a comfortable fit.

SCORE: 8.0

Vincent
Contact: vincegenius@icloud.com
Web: instagram.com/vincentvanstealyohoe
Seeking: Label, Film/TV
Style: Hip-Hop/Rap
With a silky smooth tuned-up delivery and unpredictable beat structure, Vincent is an exciting new rapper to watch. Although his flows are certainly influenced by Playboi Carti’s baby voice (as many are these days), Vincent makes it almost entirely his own. The calm and cool quality of his vocal tone and flow separated him from the compatriots for us during our listening session. As for the production, the rapper layers his tracks with really engaging, warped intros and outros, bridges with pitched-up and pitched-down vocals, and bass drops that come right out of the dark. The tracks he sent us were truly a lot of fun to listen to. Vincent is onto something really interesting and has a ton of potential.

SCORE: 8.0

The 5:55
Contact: booking@thefive5.com
Web: thefive5band.com
Seeking: Label, Booking, Film/TV
Style: Indie Alt-Rock
There are multiple reasons why this band is among our highest scoring unsigned acts of the year so far. We have not heard a better presentation in every category. Totally radio-ready. In fact, “Slow Down” is a hit, an instant winner—we were humming its chorus before the song was half over. Each song boasts terrific performances all around—especially by the singer, whose tenor has the ideal intonation for this music. The lead guitarist is no slouch, either. All songs are performed and captured in awesome detail, with deft vocal layering and instrumental flairing. Says here that this very accessible band is seeking a label, bookings, and film/TV placements. We say yes, yes and yes!

SCORE: 9.0

Reed Waddle
Contact: reedw65@gmail.com
Web: reedwaddlemusic.com
Seeking: Film/TV
Style: Americana
With a voice like “a country music Chris Martin” (Coldplay), Reed Waddle projects a spirit that is smooth and easy to like, especially when he’s giving voice to such uplifting, inspirational originals as “Too Bright To Fade Away,” which we could definitely imagine on Americana radio playlists. Waddle brings a bright, modern twang—and gets to his chorus quickly—on “Caroline,” another song that oozes with humanity. As expertly as those songs are arranged and recorded, Waddle and company raise it up a notch on “Castle Wall,” enveloping the song in a wide, mysterious well of reverb in an inspirational story about overcoming depression. Reed Waddle’s harmonic, uplifting vibes are hard to resist.

SCORE: 8.4
Livestream Minneapolis, MN
Contact: elisa@newfolkbooking.com
Web: galacticcowboyorchestra.com
Players: Lisi Wright, electric violin, lead vocals; John Wright, bass guitar, vocals; Dan Neale, electric and acoustic guitars, vocals.

Material: The Galactic Cowboy Orchestra is a progressive music outfit that seamlessly blends rock, jazz, country and symphonic sounds like no other. Their mix of select covers and innovative originals truly raises the bar. Signature compositions like the grooving fusion-like “Dark Matter” and the intricate “Triple S” rise to the occasion. And then they up the ante with such gems as The Allman Brothers’ “Whippin’ Post,” “You Know, You Know” by The Mahavishnu Orchestra and King Crimson’s “21st Century Schizoid Man.”

Musicianship: Hands down this unit is firing on all cylinders. The old adage of the sum being greater than the individual parts truly applies. Husband and wife team John and Lisi Wright, along with long-time guitarist Dan Neale, exchange melodies and solos like second nature. Often it’s difficult to discern lead lines from rhythms. There is a subconscious connection at play. Lisi is a first-tier violinist that has equal facility with improvisation as well as ambient soundscapes. She’s also an emotive singer, with just the right amount of gruffness in her delivery. John deftly switches from plectrum to finger style depending on what the tune calls for. Sans drummer, he holds it down, even strumming to add some additional rhythmic tension. Neale is a first-call guitarist in the vein of Chet Atkins or Leo Kottke. His integration of rock, jazz and bluegrass licks in a single song is amazing.

Performance: It was a musical roller coaster ride from the get go. They began with legit country like “Wabash Cannonball” and that served as a jamming vehicle that ended in an Indian raga-like finale. Neale offered some solo acoustic finger-picking excellence on an instrumental called “Grandfather Clock.” They also played a number of new things off an upcoming album. One of those, “All For the Taking,” showcased Lisi’s clever wordplay and dynamic vocal range. A cool montage from Mahavishnu to King Crimson appeared in the latter part of their set. And then they pulled a fast one, with Neale providing a vocal lead on Jerry Reed’s comical barn burner “Lord Mr. Ford.”

Summary: The GCO is an extremely accomplished and versatile unit with an innate ability to take complex arrangements and keep them soulful and entertaining. They are a musical stimulus package that is edgy and a lot of fun. – Eric Harabadian

Livestream Columbus, OH
Contact: ibydibyaol.com
Web: mcguffeylanecom

Material: John Schwab knows how to adapt to change. Forty-four years ago, he was booked as the opening act for McGuffey Lane at a house show on the Ohio State U college campus. Following an impromptu jam session on stage with the headlining band, he became their lead singer and primary songwriter. It was a moment in time that changed the trajectory of McGuffey Lane forever. Since then, Schwab’s songwriting has been essential to a live sound that is typically a mixture of heartland rock, folk rock and country rock.

Since the quarantine period began, the artist’s live adaptations of McGuffey Lane songs like “Bert” and “Day By Day” have been performed solo in an acoustic setting.

Musicianship: Although John Schwab has been the creative force behind the majority of McGuffey Lane’s studio releases, his bandmate Molly Pauken has become a mainstay in the group’s songwriting process as well. Without the capability of playing their songs in front of a live audience, Molly and John teamed up during the month of May to present a virtual performance of vocal harmonies and dueling guitars to their fans. It was meant to be a prelude to a series of virtual shows during the summer. Unfortunately, Pauken was unable to attend this August show. Nevertheless, John Schwab offered an inviting presence and a string of feel-good country ballads, like “Stay In Love With You.”

Performance: One of the first songs Schwab played was a bluegrass composition co-written by Pauken called “I Am Who I Am.” His country licks during this performance set a mood of joyful nostalgia—especially when he encouraged his viewers to sing along. That performance set the table for “Jamaica In My Mind,” with Schwab’s happy demeanor matching the subject matter and the arrangement of this Southern rocker quite well.

Summary: John Schwab played 10 unplugged versions of McGuffey Lane songs over the course of a one-hour broadcast. In the wake of a global pandemic, feelgood tunes like “Yesterday” resonated in somewhat of an uplifting manner. The band’s loyal fanbase made their presence felt as they accounted for thousands of views just moments after the show began. Schwab acknowledged his virtual supporters personally by engaging them in sporadic Q&A sessions throughout the evening. Overall, this livestream show served as a good adaptation of the live concerts that McGuffey Lane fans used to experience before quarantining became the new norm.

– Miguel Costa
Livestream Houston, TX

Contact: marketjunctionband@gmail.com
Web: marketjunction.net
Players: Matt Parrish, lead vocals, guitar; Justin Lofton, guitar, backing vocals, ganjo, harmonica; Taylor Hilyard, bass; Michael Blattel, drums; Clayton Corn, keyboard

Material: To celebrate the release of their first full-length record, Burning Bridges, country band Market Junction held a two-hour livestream performance that showcased gorgeous harmonies and confident musicality. From show opener “Nebraska” to the bare-bones love lyrics in “All I Really Need” and the combined vocal forces of Matt Parrish and Justin Lofton on the album’s title track, the band’s solid country flavor comes across as genuine and effortless.

Musicianship: “Nebraska” gave a delicate intro to Market Junction’s style, with tender vocal harmonies between founders Parrish and Lofton floating over Lofton’s lilting Ganjo and Michael Blattel’s tasteful drum brushes. The Vince Gill cover “Key to Life” and original tune “Out of Love” featured Blattel’s train beat style, and Lofton spiced up “Hitch Hiker” with harmonica and “A Stone Will Sink” with his mandola. Lofton’s down-and-dirty guitar licks on “Midwestern Highway” revealed the band’s darker tones. Guest keyboardist Clayton Corn shared fabulous Hammond sounds on “When Your Heart Begins to Ache” and “Hello, My Dear,” lending tension to the latter song’s tight vocal harmonies.

Performance: In addition to presenting all 10 tunes from their album, the group covered songs by Vince Gill, Jason Isbell and Sean McConnell, offering moments of harmonic perfection throughout the show. The friendly audience communication by this team of seasoned country musicians matched the engaging lyrics of their original repertoire, particularly evident in the tune “Western Coast.” Lead singer Parrish delivered stories about navigating life’s adventures and misfortunes, with vocals that have the feel of Clint Black, while Lofton mixed flavors of Lindsey Buckingham on slide guitar (especially on “Home to Houston”) with traditional country guitar stylings and instrumental cameos.

Summary: Through inspired storytelling, an inviting vulnerability, and versatile, multi-instrumental musicianship, Market Junction delivered a fresh and fulfilling experience that is sure to please even the most casual country fan—easily one of the soundtracks for your next pandemic-safe road trip.

— Andrea Beenham

Livestream Huntington Beach, CA

Contact: thenaturalsupernatural@gmail.com
Web: thenaturalsupernatural.com
Players: Sean Fortier, vocals, guitar; Cameron Black, saxophone, synth; Kylie Hazzard, bass; Cris Cornjeo, drums

Material: Gallagher’s Irish Pub and Grill in Huntington Beach is hosting crowd-less shows, livestreamed for our pleasure. It makes a welcome change from the multitude of solo acoustic musicians streaming from their living rooms during this pandemic and lockdown. As good as many of those have been, we’ve been craving the experience of watching a full band on a barroom stage.

Of course, a stream on a Sunday afternoon, viewed from home, doesn’t offer the complete sights, sounds and smells, but it’s a reasonable second-best. It helps that Echo Park band The Natural Supernatural have enough great songs to make up for the fact that we’re not sharing the same space. The sound is simultaneously gritty and full—a combination of bluesy rock and psychedelic funk with nods to Love and the Average White Band, heavily leaning towards Laurel Canyon-era Los Angeles. Opener “Dreamland” is a perfect example of that blend, while “Waiting” sees them dial up their raw and poetic side.

Musicianship: Frontman Fortier is clearly the ringmaster—a wonderful guitarist who doesn’t sacrifice feel for intricacy, but is able to implement both effectively. Cornjeo and Hazzard offer a solid rhythm section capable of some enjoyable flourishes. But the secret weapon is Black, whose sax breaks just add that little bit of strange. As a unit, it all works beautifully.

Performance: It’s very normal for the singer to be the focal point, but Fortier clearly loves these songs so much that it’s tough to rip your eyes away from him for a second. Despite the lack of a significant live crowd, he still plays around between songs—at one point, he says that he anthropomorphizes the sounds that his bandmates make with their instruments, adding voices. Good to know.

Summary: This Sunday stream offered proof that The Natural Supernatural are a band worth keeping an eye on, and also that Gallagher’s is offering some cool livestreamed shows. For now, this is the new normal. The best we can hope for is that venues are able to arrange for cool bands to innovate in this manner. And hopefully bands and venues are able to monetize these events and survive. These are key weeks for the industry.

— Brett Callwood
ALICE HOWE AND FREEBO

Livestream McCabe’s, Santa Monica, CA
Contact: alice@alicehowe.com, jim@flemingartists.com
Web: alicehowe.com and freebomusic.com
Players: Alice Howe, guitar, vocals, bass; Freebo, guitar, vocals, bass
Material: Howe and Freebo’s setlist was a split of individual material and offered up classics as well as brand new songs, in addition to the closer, a beautiful rendition of the late John Prine’s “Angel from Montgomery.” The duo opened with Howe’s “You’ve Been Away So Long,” which featured, elegant vocals and Freebo’s intricate bass lines that almost mimicked a guitar. Howe also included songs like “Twilight,” which showed her talents as a strong, descriptive and narrative lyricist. Freebo opted to play his own favorites like “She Loves My Dog More Than Me” and “Standing Ovation,” the most requested song during this stream. Howe also debuted a new song, dipped in elements of romance and timeless love, titled “Fantasy or Fate.”

Performance: The dynamic between Howe and Freebo is seamless and their talents complemented one another during this set. Freebo’s bass work was always interesting and unexpected, while Howe contributed well-controlled vocals that shined over the top of every song, paired with her melodic guitar lines.

Summary: All in all, Howe and Freebo’s livestream performance was well-presented, with avid musicianship and superb audio, which allowed for pristine clarity in the vocals. They achieved a dynamic that was warm and natural. It definitely was more of a “love set,” as Howe referred to it, and often lacked some amount of diversity with the types of songs chosen to play by each. — Macie Bennett

THE MAMMALS

Livestream Hudson Valley, NY
Contact: mikeandruth@gmail.com
Web: themammalslove, mikeandruth.com
Players: Mike Merenda, guitar, harmonica; Ruth Ungar Merenda, guitar, vocals, violin, banjo
Material: Husband and wife duo Mike Merenda and Ruth Ungar Merenda—the heart and soul of the Mammals, and a fixture on the folk/ Americana scene—have created an outfit that can include up to nine members at any given time (depending on the venue or project). The band’s messages reflect their mutual sense of social consciousness, from their views on politics to the environment, politely calling out injustices and raising concerns about how we treat each other as well as our planet.

In “Someone’s Hurtin’,” they lament that while some may have it good, others need help. When it feels so good/ like you’re walkin’ on air/ you know that someone’s hurtin’ somewhere. “When My Story Ends,” penned by Ungar Merenda following the loss of a friend that she learned of on Facebook, is a touching yet powerful statement about doing all you can while you are here with those you have touched: And I hope I get to say goodbye to all my friends/ When my story ends/ And if I don’t, I pray that we have all made amends/ When my story ends. They kicked off the set with “Rainbow Race,” by Pete Seeger, an artist who sang their praises.

Musicianship: Ungar Merenda, the daughter of famed fiddler Jay Ungar, started playing fiddle early on, and one could say this music is in her blood. As lead singer, her emotive and consistent vocals effectively put the messages across. Mike Merenda weighs in with his own pleasing solo sound and offers effective and well-blended harmonic support and guitar work.

Summary: With mindfulness and a sense of purpose, the Mammals’ music pushes the envelope in a gentle yet compelling way; never preachy or hitting you over the head with any one message. Their new album Nonet was recently released, its title referencing the nine members who contributed to the project. — Ellen Woloshin
Livestream Los Angeles, CA
Contact: samantha.brensilber@ledecompany.com
Web: theacesofficial.com
Players: Cristal Ramirez, vocals, guitar; Katie Henderson, guitar; McKenna Petty, bass; Alisa Ramirez, drums
Material: July saw the release of Under My Influence, the sophomore album from Utah alt-pop band The Aces and the follow-up to 2018’s critically acclaimed When My Heart Felt Volcanic. “I think our sound has just become a lot more free when we create music,” frontwoman Cristal Ramirez recently told this writer. “We feel less pressure to be anything, and maybe that’s because on our first album it feels like we established a sound and a fan base, more importantly, that really feels devoted to our band.”

That’s reasonable—the lack of pressure has resulted in a series of tracks that feel airy and joyful, even when the lyrics are raw and honest. This livestreamed show saw them perform the album in L.A. for their fans across the world, and their freer direction is immediately highlighted by show/album opener “Daydream.” While the band clings on to the alt/indie tags, the music result in a series of tracks that feel airy and joyful, even when the lyrics are raw and honest. This livestreamed show saw them perform the album in L.A. for their fans across the world, and their freer direction is immediately highlighted by show/album opener “Daydream.” While the band clings on to the alt/indie tags, the music

Performance: Knowing full well that there are a lot of eyes on them all over the globe, and that the show is being replayed a number of times afterwards, The Aces put on a great show. Full of life and incorporating some cool lighting, the experience was quite invigorating even from home. They look like they’ve been missing the experience of performing live, and this is as good as things get right now.

Summary: The wonderful thing about The Aces is that they’re practically impossible to shove into a cookie-cutter genre box. This record is strong on the alt-pop vibe, but if their next album had a sharper punk rock edge we wouldn’t be particularly surprised. That’s quite a power—the ability to do whatever they want at this stage in the career and not bump. What they actually do next will be well worth watching. – Brett Callwood

CLIFF EBERHARDT
Records. Yet he remains relatively unknown. It’s baffling that someone with his accomplishments and obvious talent could receive such a dim spotlight. Perhaps it’s a reflection of how many amazing musicians are currently vying for our attention. Or maybe it’s time we ended prioritizing flash and novelty over substance and quality. Let’s initiate a movement by patronizing one neglected artist at a time. Eberhardt would be as good a start as any. – Andy Kaufmann

CLIFF EBERHARDT
Directory of U.S. Mastering Studios

Use this exclusive Music Connection directory to connect with a mastering studio that suits your project’s needs and your budget’s limits. All data has been updated for 2020 with approved info supplied by the listees.

ALABAMA

BATES BROTHERS RECORDING
3427 Davey Allison Blvd., Ste. 101
Hueytown, AL 35022
205-491-4066
Email: btbr@batesbrothers.com
Web: batesbrothersrecording.com
Contact: Eric Bates
Basic Rate: please see web for info

SOUND OF BIRMINGHAM
3625 5th Ave. S.
Birmingham, AL 35222
205-595-8497
Email: don@soundofbirmingham.com
Web: soundofbirmingham.com
Note: 35 years + exp., please call for info

ARIZONA

ALLUSION STUDIOS
248 W. Elm St.
Tucson, AZ 85705
520-622-3895
Email: info@allusionstudios.com
Web: allusionstudios.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

THE SALTINE STUDIO OASIS
48 S. Macdonald St.
Mesa, AZ 85210
480-220-4007
Email: don@thesaltmine.com
Web: thesaltmine.com
Contact: Don Salter
Basic Rate: call for info

Gear: Weiss D1, Manley Backbone Console, Dangerous ST Monitor, Mytek AD/DA, Millennia Neve 2-2 Tube EQ, GML 8200 Equalizer, Lydtrakt Tube Tech Mastering multi-band limiter, Neve Portico II Master Buss compressor, Prism, Waves L2, ATR 1-inch Master Recorder etc.

Clients: DMX, Prong, Jay-Tee, Trapp Boyz, DJ Class, Skylark and tons of local AZ artists.

VAULT MASTERING STUDIOS
Phoenix, AZ
602-217-5940, 212-965-0100
Email: info@vaultmastering.com
Contact: Nathan James
Web: vaultmastering.com, facebook.com/vault-mastering
Basic Rate: Determined by project. Please call or email for a quote.

Previous Clients: The Fray, The Bravery, Gretchen Parlato, Charlie Hunter, John Medeski, Takuya Kuroda, John Zorn, Sting, Aretha Franklin, Joey De Francesco, This or the Apocalypse, Civil Twilight, The Senators, Sister Sparrow, Mill Avenue Chamber Players, Benjamin Zander, Boston Symphony Orchestra, etc.

ARKANSAS

RANEE RECORDING STUDIO
P.O. Box 17
110 S. Front St.
Draasco, AR 72530-9262
870-619-3172
Email: jonn@raneeengineering.com
Web: raneeengineering.com
Contact: Jon Raney
Basic Rate: please call for info

CALIFORNIA

1ST CHOICE MASTERING
259 Bruce Ave.
Glendale, CA 91202
818-246-6858
Email: info@1stchoice mastering.com
Web: bill@beltline.com
Services: bill:keks.com/producer
Basic Rate: a quick-summary of mastering

21ST CENTURY STUDIO
521 Hudding Ave., CA
323-661-3130
Web: 21stcenturystudio@earthink.net
Contact: Burt Levine, A&R
Basic Rate: call for rates

25TH ST RECORDING
456 N. Magnolia Blvd.
1510 W. Magnolia Blvd.
510-788-4089
Email: info@25thstreetrecording.com
Web: 25ststreetrecording.com
Basic Rate: $800 per 10 hr day, $45/$90 per hr

AAA CAZADOR RECORDING
Hollywood, CA
323-655-8615
Email: jimmy@jimmyhunter.com
Web: jimmyhunter.com
Basic Rate: negotiable/call and we can discuss

ABACAB MULTIMEDIA, INC.
254 Fischer Ave., Ste. A-9
Costa Mesa, CA 92626
714-432-1745
Email: sales@abacab.net
Web: abacab.net
Basic Rate: please call or see web

AB AUDIO VISUAL
4212 Hackett Ave.
Lakeview, CA 90173-3208
777/ABAUDIO (222-8346), 662-429-1042
Web: abaudio.com
Contact: President, Arlan Boll
Basic Rate: work with all budgets

ABET DISC
411 E. Huntington Dr., Ste. 107-372
Arcadia, CA 91006
626-303-4114
Email: sales@abetdisc.com
Web: abetdisc.com
Contact: Aerion K. Nersoyan

AUDIO MECHANICS
1200 W. Magnolia Blvd.
213-487-1600
818-846-5525
Web: audio mechanics.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

AUDИOSTUDIO
231 E. Altos, CA
650-428-1854
Email: info@audiosudio.com
Web: audiosudio.com
Contact: Jim LaForest

ARDENT AUDIO PRODUCTIONS
2212 S. Vernon Ave., Unit “E”
Torrance, CA 90501
310-782-0125
Email: rwnuzelaa@aol.com
Web: ardentaudiodproductions.com

BAKERY MASTERING STUDIO
8468 3rd Ave.
Silver Lake, CA 90023
323-405-3102
Email: info@bakery mastering.com
Web: bakery mastering.com

BERNIE BECKER MASTERING
626-782-5703
Email: ryan@bercker mastering.com
Web: beckermastering.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

BERNIE GRUNDMAN MASTERING
1640 N. Gower St.
Hollywood, CA 90028
323-466-6264
Email: jack@bgmastering.com
Web: berniegrundmannmastering.com
Contact: Bernie Grundman, Mike Bozzi, Chris Bellman, Patricia Sullivan, Scott Sedgley
Basic Rate: please call for info

BIG CITY RECORDING STUDIOS
17021 Chatsworth St.
Granada Hills, CA 91344
818-366-0995
Email: paul@bigcityrecording.com
Web: bigcityrecording.com
Contact: Paul Taverner
Basic Rate: please call or see web

BIG SURPRISE MUSIC
Encina, CA
818-613-3884
Email: info@carmengrillo.com
Web: bigsurprise music.com
Contact: Carmen Grillo
Basic Rate: call for rates

BOSS STUDIOS
San Francisco, CA
415-626-1234
Web: bossstudios.com
Contact: Brian Zamorano
Basic Rate: please call for info

CAPITOL MASTERING
1750 N. Vine St.
Los Angeles, CA 90028
323-877-5033
Email: ryan.simpson@umusic.com
Web: capitolstudies.com/studios
Basic Rate: please call for info

CARPINC嵐ER MASTERING
927 E. St.
San Diego, CA 92101
619-231-6999
Email: info@capircarstudies.net
Web: capircarstudies.net

CHARLES LAURENCE PRODUCTIONS
Northridge, CA
818-368-4692
Web: cipstudios.tri.com
Contact: Charles Laurence
Basic Rate: please call for info

CLEAR LAKE AUDIO
10250 Burbank Blvd.
North Hollywood, CA 91601
818-762-2877
Email: contact@clearlake recording.com
Web: clearlakeaudio.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

COLEVERLAND STUDIOS
Sulphur Music
North Hollywood, CA
818-503-1157
Web: sulphurly.com

CULVER CITY, CA 90232
310-736-6681
Email: booking@thebakeryla.com
Web: thebakeryla.com

DENA VINNEM MASTERING
Rockridge District of Oakland, CA
510-984-0954
Email: dena@denavinne mastering.com
Web: denavinne.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

DAVEN THE MAD HATTER STUDIOS
Los Angeles, CA 90036
323-876-1212
Email: faye@daventhemadhatterstudios.com
Web: daventhemadhatter.com
Contact: studio manager
Basic Rate: please call for info

DIENOISE.COM
1050 Murray St.
Berkeley, CA 94710
510-653-3838
Email: info@dienoise.com
Web: dienoise.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

DIAMOND DREAMS MUSIC PRODUCTIONS
North O.C., Carbon Canyon 91709
909-393-6120
Email: diamonddreamsmusic@yahoo.com
Web: diamonddreamsmusic.com
Contact: Raphael De Giorgio
Basic Rate: please call for info, varies from project to project

DINO M4 RECORDING/MASTERING STUDIO
Torrance, CA
Project to project, $65-$150 per hr
Contact: Albert Benichou
Basic Rate: please call for info

DIVA MULTI-MEDIA INC.
1200 W. Magnolia Blvd.
(10 minutes South of LAX)
310-782-1440
Email: divam4recording@msn.com
Web: facebook.com/DinoM4RECORDING
Contact: Dino Maddalone

DISKFACTORY
14 Chrysler
Irving, TX 75062
855-273-4263
Email: customerscare@diskfactory.com
Web: diskfactory.com
Basic Rate: please see web or call

DNA MASTERING
19528 Ventura Blvd., Ste. 315
Tarzana, CA 91356
818-992-4034
Email: info@DNAmastering.com
Web: dnamastering.com
Contact: David Donnelly, Perry Cunningham
Basic Rate: Special rate for Indie and unsigned artists

ELYSIAN MASTERS
P.O. Box 50568
Los Angeles, CA 90056
323-838-6283
Web: elysianmasters.com

EZE STUDIO
21501 Eisele St., Ste. 900 Woodland Hills, CA 91367
818-444-4744
Email: brian@ezestudios.com
Web: ezestudios.com
Contact: Brian Zamorano
Basic Rate: please see web or call

Addisonal Location:
75 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, NY 10019
212-275-2160
Email: James@ezestudios.com
Contact: James Winner

Compiled by Denise Coso
Use this exclusive Music Connection directory to connect with a mastering studio that suits your project's needs and your budget's limits.

All data has been updated for 2020 with approved info supplied by the listees.

JUNGLE ROOM RECORDING STUDIOS
6420 E Sonora Ave.
Glendale, CA 91201
310-247-1991
Email: info@jungleroom.net
Web: jungleroom.net
Basic Rate: please see web or call

KEN LEE MASTERING
3060 El Cerito Plaza No. 542
El Cerito, CA 94015
510-428-9753
Email: klenmastering@hotmail.com
Web: facebook.com/kenleemastering
Basic Rate: please email

KINGSIZE SOUNDLABS
Los Angeles, CA 90038
323-533-0022
Email: ronnkingsoundlabs@gmail.com
Web: kingsizesoundlabs.com
Basic Rate: call for more info

LILIPUTTER MUSIC STUDIOS
14527 Leadvill St.
Van Nuys, CA 91405
818-570-3499
Email: contact@liliputtermusic.com
Web: liliputtermusic.com
Contact: David Snow
Basic Rate: please call for info

LURSSEN MASTERING
4109 W Burbank Blvd.
Burbank, CA 91505
323-924-7153
Email: Jamie@lurssenmastering.com
Web: lurssenmastering.com
Contact: Jamie Fratta Peters, Engineer

MAGIC GARDEN MASTERING
Los Angeles, CA 90036
614-620-4567
Email: briang@magiccagardenmastering.com
Web: magiccagardenmastering.com
Contact: Brian Lucey

MAMBO SOUND & RECORDING
2200 W. Estler
Long Beach, CA 90813
562-432-9676
Email: steve@mambosound.net
Web: mambosoundandrecording.com
Contact: Steve McNeil
Basic Rate: please call for info

MAOR APPELLBAUM MASTERING – “Sounds With Impact”
Woodland Hills, CA 91364
818-564-0676
Email: maor@mappersound.com
Web: maorappelbaum.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

MARSH MASTERING
Los Angeles, CA 90020
323-665-6038 Fax 310-596-5865
Email: marsh@marshmastering.com
Web: marshmastering.com
Contact: Stephen or Fernando
Basic Rate: flat rates for unattended sessions, hourly rates for attended sessions

MELROSE MASTERING
5545 Melrose Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90038
310-561-5553
Email: melrose@melrose.com
Web: melrose mastering.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

MIKEL WELLS MASTERING
4470 W Sunset Blvd., #147
Los Angeles, CA 90027
323-363-2339
Email: studio@mikelwellsmastering.com
Web: mikelwellsmastering.com
Contact: Mike Wells
Basic Rate: Please call for rates
Notes: Instagram: @mekwellsmastering

M L E STUDIOS
P.O. Box 1014
Woodland Hills, CA 91365
866-246-8846
Email: mail@majorlabelmusic.com
Web: majorlabelmusic.com, facebook.com/mikewellstudios
Contact: Col. Darryl Harrelson
Basic Rate: $45.00/hr or flat rate per song/album small independent studio specializing in country, Americana and alt country genres.

Mega Groove Studios
1008 N Colfax Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90038
323-646-1008
Email: claudia@precisionmastering.com
Web: precisionmastering.com
Contact: Claudia Lagane

PRIVATE ISLAND TRAX
1882 S. Cochran Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90019
323-865-8729
Email: info@privateislandtrad.com
Web: www.privateislandtrad.com
Basic Rate: please call for rates

PRODUCTION COMPANY MASTERING & RECORDING STUDIO, THE
573 Valley Dr.
Hermosa Beach, CA 90254
310-379-6477
Email: rockzionrecords@rockzion.com
Web: rockzion.com/productinfo.co
Contact: Dennis
Basic Rate: analog and digital, call for info

PROFESSIONAL MUSICIAN’S LOCAL 47
3220 Winona Ave.
Burbank, CA 91505
323-462-2161
Web: promusic47.org
Contact: Aimee - $100/song
Basic Rate: please call for info

PHUTEREAX
Redondo Beach, CA 90277
310-363-0243
Email: don@phutereax.com
Web: phutereax.com
Contact: Don Corieri

PYRAMID-AXIS DIGITAL
Redondo Beach, CA 90277
Email: music@pyramidaxis.com
Web: pyramidaxis.com
Contact: Jim D
Basic Rate: please email for info

PYRAMID RECORDING AND MASTERING
4353 E. Pine Ave.
Fresno, CA 93703
559-709-0610
Web: pyramidrecording.net
Basic Rate: no minimum

RESOLUTION MASTERING
Sherman Oaks, CA 818-481-7064
Email: info@resolutionmastering.com
Web: resolutionmastering.com
Contact: Ron Boustead
Basic Rate: no minimum

QUALITY CLOSES MASTERING, CD MASTERING & DVD AUTHORING
3940 Laurel Canyon Blvd., # 405
Studio City, CA 91604
323-464-5853
Email: qualityclones@sbglobal.net
Web: qualityclones.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

RACE HORSE STUDIOS
3780 Selby Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90034
310-280-0175 Fax 310-280-0176
Email: duncan@racehorsestudios.com
Web: racehorsestudios.com
Contact: Duncan Macfarlane
Basic Rate: please call for info

RED RUM STUDIOS
Email: info@redrumproductions.net
Web: redrumproductions.net
Contact: Simon or Boi
Basic Rate: please email for info

RL AUDIO
1646 N. Cursin Ave.
West Hollywood, CA 90046
310-887-8547
Web: rlaudio.net
Basic Rate: see website

RDP STUDIOS
1842 Burleson Ave.
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360
805-496-2585
Email: rdpstudios@roaddrunner.com
Web: rdpstudios.com
Contact: Randy
Basic Rate: please call for info
Directory of U.S. Mastering Studios

TAPROOT AUDIO DESIGN
108 Co Rd 411
Oxford, MS 38655
662-901-2373
Email: info@taprootaudiodesign.com
Web: taprootaudiodesign.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

THE HIDEOUT RECORDING STUDIO
14 Sunset Way
Henderson, NV 89014
702-445-7705
Web: hideoutlv.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

BLACK DOG MASTERING STUDIO
260 E. Flamingo Rd., Unit 327
Las Vegas, NV 89169
702-445-7705
Email: BlackDogMastering@gmail.com
Web: blackdogmastering.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

SILK CITY RECORDS
175 Bridgton Drive
Pasippany, NJ 07454
973-599-0237
Email: silkcitycd@aol.com
Web: silkcitycd.com
Contact: Andy Allu
Basic Rate: call for info

STORY BOOK SOUND
Maplewood, NJ
Email: info@storeysound.com
Web: storybooksound.com
Contact: Scott Anthony, Rebecca Turner

NEW HAMPSHIRE
CEDAR HOUSE SOUND & MASTERING
710 North Rd.
North Sutton, NH 03260
Email: cedarhousesound@gmail.com
Web: cedarhousesound.com

NEW JERSEY
DISC MAKERS
7905 N. Rte. 130
Ringwood, NJ
Email: info@dismakers.com
Web: dismakers.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

ED LITTMAN MASTERING
35 Harrow Cl.
North Haledon, NJ 07508
201-924-7860
Email: littmuez@edlittmanmastering.com
Web: edlittmanmastering.com
Contact: Ed Littman
Basic Rate: available on website

HERB POWERS, JR.
PM Mastering, Inc.
Old Bridge, NJ 08857
973-886-7444
Email: pmmastering@mac.com
Web: pmmastering.com
Contact: Angie Powers
Masterclass: redbullmusicacademy.com/ lectures/herb-powers

JOE LAMBERT MASTERING
115 Christopher Columbus Dr., Ste. 204
Jersey City, NJ 07302
201-332-7000
Email: danielazini@JLSound.com
Web: joelambertmastering.com

KNOCK MASTERING
Ringwood, NJ
973-556-5749
Email: kensrosen@knackmastering.com
Web: knackmastering.com
Contact: Kim Rosen
Services: specializes in analog audio mastering for digital & vinyl formats, audio restoration and vinyl and tape transfers

OASIS DISC MANUFACTURING
7905 N. Rte. 130
Delair, NJ 08110
866-296-2747
Email: info@oasiscd.com
Web: oasiscd.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

MONTANA
BOONE PRODUCTIONS
579 Belt Creek Rd.
Belt, MT 59412
406-778-2095
Email: aviator@3ivers.net
Web: booneproductions.com
Contact: Daniel Gilko
Basic Rate: please call for info

RECORDING EDGE
615 E. Cameron Bridge Rd.
Bozeman, MT 59718
406-388-5042
Email: info@recordingedge.com
Web: recordingedge.com
Contact: Edd Gynyder
Basic Rate: please contact for info

NEBRASKA
STUDIO 24
8601 N. 30th St.
Omaha, NE 68112
402-342-9090
Email: chuckbeckler@studio24omaha.com
Web: studio24omaha.com
Contact: Chuck Beckler
Basic Rate: please call for info

WAREHOUSE PRODUCTIONS
206 S. 44th St.
Omaha, NE 68131
402-553-8523
Email: whp@qwestoffice.net
Web: warehouseproductions.net

NEW MEXICO
HIGH FIDELITY MASTERING
1000 Wyoming Blvd. N.E., Ste. 315
Albuquerque, NM 87123
505-459-6242
Email: andy@highfidelitymastering.com
Web: highfidelitymastering.com
Contact: Andy Rogulich
Basic Rate: please call for info

THUNDER DIGITAL
Albuquerque, NM
505-822-8273
Email: phil@thunderdigital.com
Web: thunderdigital.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

NEW YORK
BANG ZOOM MASTERING
P.O. Box 145
Orangeburg, NY 10962
845-398-0723
Email: michael@pmdigital.com
Web: masteringzone.net
Contact: Steve Vavagiakis
Services: analog and digital audio mastering

BATTERY STUDIOS
(Sony Music Entertainment)
321 W 44th St., Suite 1001
New York, NY 10036
212-833-7373
Email: donna.kloepfer@batterystudios.com
Web: batterystudios.com

ENGINE ROOM AUDIO
42 Broadway, 22nd Fl.
New York, NY 10004
212-625-3467
Email: info@engineroomaudio.com
Web: engineroomaudio.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

KEVORKIAN MASTERING
c/o Avatar Studios
411 W 53 St., C/o Avatar Studios
New York, NY 10019
917-406-9147, 212-765-7500
Email: knackmastering.com
Web: knackmastering.com

MUSIC HOUSE MASTERING
543 Middle Country Rd.
Coram, NY 11727
631-804-0201
Email: info@musichousemastering.com
Web: musichousemastering.com
Contact: Michael Dornisi, owner
Basic Rate: call for rates

RIGHT TOUCH MASTERING
New York, NY
888-707-6070 Ext. 1
Email: info@righttouchmastering.com
Web: righttouchmastering.com
Contact: Gordon Bahary
Basic Rate: Call For Info

SKYELAB MUSIC PRODUCTIONS
37 W 37th St., 12th Floor
New York, NY 10018
212-789-8942
Email: info@skyelab.com
Web: skyelab.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

STERLING SOUND
33 Hilliard Avenue
Edgewater, NJ 07020
212-606-9433
Email: mark.glasner@sterling-sound.com
Web: sterling-sound.com
Basic Rate: please see web

THE MASTERING PALACE
307 W. 121st St.
New York, NY 10027
212-625-2500
Contact: Scott Kubrin
Email: skubrin@themasteringpalace.com
Web: themasteringpalace.com

THRESHOLD MUSIC
212-244-1871
Email: thresholdsoundos@gmail.com
Web: kevorkianmastering.com
Contact: Fred Kevorkian

LODGE, THE
740 Broadway, Ste 605
New York, NY 10003
212-353-3895
Email: info@thedodge.com
Web: thedodge.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

MASTERDISK STUDIOS
8 John Walsh Blvd., Ste 411
Peekskill, NY 10801
212-541-5023
Email: scott@masterdisk.com
Web: masterdisk.com
Contact: Scott Hull
Basic Rate: premium services & Indie mastering

Services: Mastering for all formats (Vinyl, CD, Streaming, iTunes, Video, Surround, HD), Vinyl Disk Cutting Form HD Digital, Vinyl Disk Cutting from Analog Tape, Direct to Disk Recording, Restoration and archival of historic formats. (Disk, Tape & Digital), Recording, Mixing and Mastering, Mix evaluation and consulting

Directory of U.S. Mastering Studios

October 2020
musicconnection.com
HILLTOP RECORDING STUDIOS
902 Due W. Ave.
Nashville, TN 37211
615-865-5272
Web: hilltopstudio.com
Contact: John Nicholson

INDEPENDENT MASTERING
1312 16th Ave. S.
Nashville, TN 37212
615-425-0739
Email: eric@independentmastering.com
Web: independentmastering.com

JAMSYNC
1232 17th Ave. S.
Nashville, TN 37212
615-320-5050 Fax 615-340-9559
Web: jamsync.com
Contact: John Nicholson
Basic Rate: please call for info

MASTERFONICS
28 Music Sq. West, E
Nashville, TN 37203
615-720-2761
Email: tommy@masterfonics.com
Web: masterfonics.com
Contact: Tommy Dorsey
Basic Rate: please call for info

MAYFIELD MASTERING
2825 Erica Pl.
Nashville, TN 37204
615-383-3708
Web: mayfieldmastering.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

MASTERPIECE MASTERING
5543 Edmondson Pike #100
Nashville, TN 37211
615-686-1725
Web: theplaceformastering.com
Contact: Alex Rockafellar, Studio Mgr.
Basic Rate: Email your project info to
Alex for a free quote.
Clients: Eric Clapton, John Mayer, Edwin
McCain, Jeff Buckley, James Brown. Indie
artists worldwide are welcome.

TEXAS AMBIENT DIGITAL
Houston, TX
832-808-DISC
Email: mastering@ambientdigital.com
Web: ambientdigital.com
Contact: Bob Boyd
Basic Rate: please call for an estimate

CROWN RECORDS
402 Peoples St., Ste. 3C
Corpus Christi, TX 78401
361-882-8881
Web: crownrecords.com
Basic Rate: please contact for info

DES MASTERING
1609 S. Lamar St., Ste. 100
Dallas, TX 75215
214-428-8777
Email: george@desmastering.com
Web: desmastering.com
Basic Rate: see website

EAGLE AUDIO RECORDING
911 S. Main St.
Fort Worth, TX 76104
817-877-4338 Fax 817-259-1674
Email: info@eagleaudiorecording.com
Web: eagleaudiorecording.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

FORT WORTH SOUND
306 S. Main St.
Ft. Worth, TX 76104
817-922-5444
Web: fortworthsound.com
Contact: Bart Rose
Basic Rate: please call for info

JO MUSIK
1317 16th Ave. S.
Nashville, TN 37212
972-226-1265
Email: info@jomusik.com
Web: jomusik.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

TEXAS DIGITAL AUDIO, INC.
9675 Escarpment Blvd. #450
Austin, TX 78733-1559
512-922-5444
Web: texasdigitalaudio.com
Contact: Chris Longwood
Basic Rate: please call for info

TERRA NOVA
650-595-8475
Email: info@otrstudios.com
Web: otrstudios.com/mastering
Basic Rate: Please call for info

SUGARHILL STUDIOS
5006 16th Ave. S.
Houston, TX 77023
713-922-5444
Email: sugarhills@msn.com
Web: facebook.com/SugarHillStudios
Contact: Chris Longwood
Basic Rate: please call for info

"Our Live Review in Music Connection opened up opportunities to perform with national acts. The folks at Music Connection are super approachable and helpful. Plus, we read their articles online every other day to get pro tips.” – Westerner
VAULT RECORDING STUDIOS, THE
9135 Katy Fwy., Ste. 1
Houston, TX 77024
713-722-8900
Email: info@vaultrecording.com
Contact: David Williams
Basic Rate: please call for info

WEXTRAX MASTERING LABS
McKinney, TX
214-544-1554, 214-585-1692
Email: rob@wextrax.com
Web: wextrax.com
Contact: Rob Wechsler
Basic Rate: please call for info

WIRE ROAD STUDIOS
901 W. 20th St.
Houston, TX 77008
713-636-9772
Email: contact@wireroadstudios.com
Web: wireroadstudios.com
Contact: Bill Wade
Basic Rate: By request per project

VAULT RECORDING STUDIOS, THE
9135 Katy Fwy., Ste. 1
Houston, TX 77024
713-722-8900
Email: info@vaultrecording.com
Contact: David Williams
Basic Rate: please call for info

VERMONT
LITTLE CASTLE STUDIO
802-349-1280
Email: littlecastlesstudio@yahoo.com
Web: littlecastle.com
Contact: Horace Williams, Jr.
Basic Rate: please call for info

LANE GIBSON
413 Carpenter Rd.
Charlotte, VT 05445
802-425-3508
Web: laneagibson.com

OLD MILL ROAD RECORDING
Dr. Joshua Sherman
316 Old Mill Road
East Arlington, VT 05252
978-312-5995
Email: Info@oldmillroadrecording.com
Web: oldmillroadrecording.com

CUE RECORDING STUDIOS
109 Park Ave., Ste. E
Falls Church, VA 22046
703-532-9033
Email: info@cuerecording.com
Web: cuerecording.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

WASHBURN MASTERING
P.O. Box 8217
Norfolk, VA 23503
757-524-1364
Email: washburnmastering.com
Contact: Todd Washburn
Basic Rate: please call for info

WASHINGTON
GLENN SCHICK MASTERING
Seattle, WA
206-714-7227
Web: gsmastering.com
Basic Rate: please call for info

WYOMING
INTEGRATED IMAGING
133 S. McKinley St.
Casper, WY 82601
307-264-1829
Email: info@iilabs.com
Web: iilabs.com/about-us.php
Services: video and audio duplication

L4 COMMUNICATIONS
P.O. Box 52332
Casper, WY 82605
307-259-4986
Email: info@L4communications.com
Web: L4communications.com
Services: digital editing

For hundreds more contacts from current directories (A&R, guitar/bass instructors, everything indie, promotion, publicity, vocal coaches, college radio, recording studios, managers, booking agents, mastering studios, publishers, film/TV and more), visit our website: musicconnection.com/industry-contacts.
Directory of College/Indie Radio

If you’re looking to get your music played by college and indie radio stations, this one-of-a-kind MC directory is the ideal resource. Updated for 2020, it features not only radio stations nationwide, but also independent radio promotion professionals.

ALABAMA
University of Alabama
Music Directory
Box 870710
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487
205-348-5061
Email: music@wvuafm.ua.edu, local-music@wvuafm.ua.edu
Web: wvuafm.ua.edu
Format: eclectic

ARIZONA
KXCI 91.3 FM
220 S. 4th Ave.
Tucson, AZ 85701
520-623-1000 Ext. 16
Email: Duncan@kxci.org
Web: kxci.org
Contact: Duncan Hudson
Format: eclectic

CALIFORNIA
KALX 90.7 FM
University of California, Berkeley
26 Barrows Hall, Ste. 5650
Berkeley, CA 94720-5650
510-642-1111
Email: music@kalx.berkeley.edu
Web: kalx.berkeley.edu
Contact:
Format: eclectic

KCRH 89.9 FM
Chabot College
25555 Hesperian Blvd.
Hayward, CA 94545
510-723-6954
Email: music@KCRHRadio.com
Web: kcrhradio.com
Contact:
Format: eclectic

KCPP 91.3 FM
Cal Poly State University
Building 26, Room 301
1 Grand Ave.
San Luis Obispo, CA 93407
805-756-5277
Email: kcpp@calpoly.edu
Web: kcpp.org
Contact:
Format: eclectic

KCRW 89.9 FM
Santa Monica College
1900 Pico Blvd.
Santa Monica, CA 90405
424-538-8500
Email: mail@kcrw.com
Web: kcrw.com
Contact: Jason Bentley
Format: eclectic
Note: Submissions are all done through the website malcolm.kcrw.com

KCSC 88.5 FM
California State University, Northridge
18111 Northrd St.
Northridge, CA 91330-8312
818-677-7300
Email: mookie@kcsn.org
Web: kcsn.org
Contact: Marcus Kaczor
Format: Smart rock

KDYV 90.3 FM
University of California
14 Lower Freeborn Hall
Davis, CA 95616
530-752-0728
Email: kdysmusicdeptartment@gmail.com
Web: kdys.org
Contact: Adrian Lopez, Music Director
Format: eclectic/free form

KFJC 89.7 FM
Foothill College
12345 S. El Monte Rd.
Los Altos Hills, CA 94022
650-949-7260 Fax 650-948-1085
Email: md@kfjc.org
Web: kfjc.org
Contact: Nicolas Lacasse, Music Director
Format: eclectic

KJAZZ 88.1 FM
California State University, Long Beach
1500 Cottier Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90025
310-478-5540
Email: bjaskson@kkjz.org
Web: jazzandblues.org
Contact: Bubba Jackson, Program Dir.
Format: jazz & blues

KLBC
Long Beach City College
4901 E. Carson St.
Long Beach, CA 90808
562-938-4800
Web: facebook.com/KLBCRADIO
Format: eclectic

KOHL 89.3 FM
Ohioue Community College
43800 Mission Blvd.
Fremont, CA 94539
510-659-6221
Web: kohlradio.org
Contact:
Format: eclectic

KSCU 163.3 FM
Claremont McKenna College
500 E. Camino Real, Ste. 3207
Santa Clara, CA 95053
408-654-4907
Email: music@kscu.org
Web: kscu.org
Format: eclectic

KSBR 88.5 FM
Saddleback Community College
Student Services Center, Room 223
28000 Marguerite Pkwy.
Mission Viejo, CA 92692
949-582-5757
Email: ksb885@gmail.com
Web: ksb85.net
Format: Jazz, Chill, Electronica

KJZS 90.5 FM
San Jose State University
Hugh Gillis Hall, Rm. 132
San Jose, CA 95192-0094
Contact: Chad Olin-Jolin, Program Director
408-924-5757
Email: chadharkson101@yahoo.com

KCSN 90.5 FM
Colorado State University
Room 118, Lory Student Center
Fort Collins, CO 80523
970-491-1695
Email: music@kcsufm.com
Web: kcsufm.com
Contact:
Format: eclectic

KGNU 88.5 FM
7400 Walnut St.
Boulder, CO 80301
303-449-4885
Web: kgnu.org
Contact:
Format: eclectic

KRCU 91.5 FM
Colorado College
912 N. Weber St.
Colorado Springs, CO 80903
719-743-4801
Email: dj@krcu.org
Web: krcu.org
Contact:
Format: eclectic

KVCU 1190 AM
University of Colorado
Campus Box 207
Boulder, CO 80309
303-492-1109
Email: owen.Zoll@radio1190.colorado.edu
Web: radio1190.org
Contact: Max Askari, Music Dir.
Format: eclectic

CONNECTICUT
WESU 88.1 FM
Wesleyan University
45 Broad St 2nd Fl
Middletown, CT 06457
860-685-7703
Email: wesumed@wesufm.org
Web: wesufm.org
Format: free form

WHUS 91.7 FM
University of Connecticut
Student Union Building, Room 412
2110 Hillside Rd., Unit 3008R
Storrs, CT 06269-3008
860-486-8487
Email: musicdirector@whus.org
Web: whus.org
Format: eclectic

WNHU-88.7 FM
University of New Haven
46 Ruden St
West Haven, CT 06516
Email: devonmaddis@wnhu.org
Web: whnu.net
Format: eclectic

WRTC 89.3 FM
Trinity College
300 Summit St.
Hartford, CT 06106
860-297-2439
Email: djwasee@gmail.com
Web: wtrcfm.com
Format: eclectic

WWUH 91.3 FM
University of Hartford
200 Bloomfield Ave.
West Hartford, CT 06117
860-768-4703
Email: wwwh@hartford.edu
Web: wwwh.org
Format: world, women's, folk, polka, jazz, alt, classical, bluegrass, news, film, opera

COLORADO
KCSU 90.5 FM
Colorado State University
Room 118, Lory Student Center
Fort Collins, CO 80523
970-491-1695
Email: music@kcsufm.com
Web: kcsufm.com
Format: eclectic

KGNU 88.5 FM
7400 Walnut St.
Boulder, CO 80301
303-449-4885
Web: kgnu.org
Contact:
Format: eclectic

KXCI 91.3 FM
Colorado College
912 N. Weber St.
Colorado Springs, CO 80903
719-743-4801
Email: dj@krcu.org
Web: krcu.org
Format: eclectic

KVCU 1190 AM
University of Colorado
Campus Box 207
Boulder, CO 80309
303-492-1109
Email: owen.Zoll@radio1190.colorado.edu
Web: radio1190.org
Contact: Max Askari, Music Dir.
Format: eclectic

CONNECTICUT
WESU 88.1 FM
Wesleyan University
45 Broad St 2nd Fl
Middletown, CT 06457
860-685-7703
Email: wesumed@wesufm.org
Web: wesufm.org
Format: free form

WHUS 91.7 FM
University of Connecticut
Student Union Building, Room 412
2110 Hillside Rd., Unit 3008R
Storrs, CT 06269-3008
860-486-8487
Email: musicdirector@whus.org
Web: whus.org
Format: eclectic

WNHU-88.7 FM
University of New Haven
46 Ruden St
West Haven, CT 06516
Email: devonmaddis@wnhu.org
Web: whnu.net
Format: eclectic

WRTC 89.3 FM
Trinity College
300 Summit St.
Hartford, CT 06106
860-297-2439
Email: djwasee@gmail.com
Web: wtrcfm.com
Format: eclectic

WWUH 91.3 FM
University of Hartford
200 Bloomfield Ave.
West Hartford, CT 06117
860-768-4703
Email: wwwh@hartford.edu
Web: wwwh.org
Format: world, women's, folk, polka, jazz, alt, classical, bluegrass, news, film, opera

FLORIDA
WWFV 89.7 FM
Florida State University
Music Director
420 Diffenbaugh Building
Tallahassee, FL 32304-1550
850-644-3871
Email: music@wfsu.fsu.edu
Web: wfsu.fsu.edu
Format: eclectic

Compiled by Denise Coso
If you're looking to get your music played by college and indie radio stations, this one-of-a-kind MC directory is the ideal resource. Updated for 2020, it features not only radio stations nationwide, but also independent radio promotion professionals.

Georgia

WRAS 88.5 FM
Georgia State University
(mail submissions via USPS)
P.O.Box 0404
Atlanta, GA 30302
Web: wras.org
Format: eclectic
Note: We do not except CD singles, MP3's or cassettes, Hard copy EPs/LPs (in CD or Vinyl).
*Mail submissions via UPS, DHL or FedEx.

WREK 91.1 FM
Georgia Tech Student Radio
Music Director
350 Ferst Dr.N.W., Ste. 2224
Atlanta, GA 30332-0630
404-894-2245
Email: music.director@wrekg.org
Web: wrekg.org
Format: eclectic

Hawaii

KTUH 90.3 FM
University of Hawaii
2445 Campus Rd.
Hemenway Hall, Ste. 203
Honolulu, HI 96822
808-956-7261
Email: md@ktuht.org
Web: ktuht.org/music
Format: all genres

Idaho

KUIO 89.3 FM
University of Idaho
Student Union Building, 3rd Fl.
Campus Box 444272
Moscow, ID 83844-4272
208-885-7825
Email: kuo@uidaho.edu
Web: kuoi.com/index.html
Format: eclectic

Illinois

Radio Depaul
DePaul University
2250 N. Sheffield Ave. Suite 317
Chicago, IL 60614
773-325-7308
Email: radiodepaulmusic@gmail.com
Web: radio.depaulu.edu
Format: eclectic

WESN 88.1 FM
Wesleyan University
Music Director
WESN 88.1 FM
P.O. Box 2900
Bloomington, IN 47404
317-872-4323
Email: wesn@iwu.edu
Web: wesn.org
Format: eclectic

Kansas

KJHK-90.7 FM
University of Kansas
1301 Jayhawk Blvd.
Lawrence, KS 66045
785-864-4747
Email: submitmusic@kjhk.org
Web: kjhk.org
Contact: Lily Grant, Music Dir.
Format: eclectic

KSDB 91.9 FM
Kansas State University
105 Kedzie Hall
Manhattan, KS 66506
785-532-2330
Email: music@ksdbfm.org
Web: ksdbfm.org
Contact: Leandre Carthen, Station Mgr.
Format: alternative/hip-hop

Michigan

WCBN 88.3 FM
University of Michigan
510 Thompson St.
Student Activities Bldg.
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1316
734-763-3501
Email: music@wcbn.org
Web: wcbn.org
Format: free form

WDBM 89 FM
Michigan State University
G-4 Holden Hall
234 Wilson Rd.
East Lansing, MI 48825
517-353-9899
Email: pd@impact89fm.org
Web: impact89fm.org
Format: alt-rock

WDET 101.9 FM
Wayne State University
4600 Cass Ave.
Detroit, MI 48201
313-577-1414
Email: wdetfm.org
Web: wdetfm.org
Format: eclectic

Missouri

KCOU 88.1 FM
2500 MU Student Center
Columbia, MO 65201
573-882-7820
Email: stationmanager@kcmu.org
Web: kmnu.org
Format: free form

W Kur 90.5 FM
University of Missouri
218 Hearnes Center
Rolla, MO 65409
573-341-4272
Email: music@kwur.org
Web: kwur.org
Format: eclectic

WPSU 88.3 FM
Penn State University
University Park
State College, PA 16802
814-863-1158
Email: music@wpsu.org
Web: wpsu.org
Format: college, metal, folk, blues

North Carolina

WFMY 88.7 FM
High Point University
High Point, NC 27260-9061
336-841-5061
Email: music@wfmt.org
Web: wfmt.org
Format: college alternative

WJR 90.5 FM
Michigan State University
Communication Arts & Sciences Bldg.
East Lansing, MI 48824
517-355-1900
Email: karolopedra@wjr.org
Web: wjr.org
Format: new age, world, folk, classical

Ohio

WSN 90.1 FM
Bowling Green State University
Bowling Green, OH 43403
419-372-8395
Email: music@wbsn.org
Web: wbsn.org
Format: eclectic

Pennsylvania

WPSM 88.1 FM
Pittsburgh State University
Pittsburgh, PA 15209
412-624-9172
Email: music@wpsm.org
Web: wpsm.org
Format: eclectic

Rhode Island

WHFR 88.1 FM
Rhode Island College
Providence, RI 02912
401-865-2146
Email: music@whfr.com
Web: whfr.com
Format: eclectic

South Carolina

WCSU 88.1 FM
Clemson University
Clemson, SC 29631
864-656-2560
Email: music@wcsu.org
Web: wcsu.org
Format: eclectic

South Dakota

KHUE 88.3 FM
Black Hills State University
Bisbee, SD 57716
605-673-9000
Email: music@khue.org
Web: khue.org
Format: eclectic

Texas

KUOM 89.9 FM
University of North Dakota
Grand Forks, ND 58202
701-777-2882
Email: music@kuom.org
Web: kuom.org
Format: college alternative

Utah

WEIR 88.5 FM
Utah State University
Logan, UT 84322
435-797-2737
Email: WECFMemdir@gmail.com
Web: sites.williams.edu/wcftm
Format: eclectic

Washington

KUOM 89.9 FM
University of Northern Colorado
G-4 Holden Hall
234 Wilson Rd.
East Lansing, MI 48825
517-353-9899
Email: pd@impact89fm.org
Web: impact89fm.org
Format: alt-rock

West Virginia

WVMB 88.1 FM
West Virginia University
1050 High St.
Morgantown, WV 26506
304-293-1311
Email: music@wvmb.org
Web: wvmb.org
Format: eclectic

Wisconsin

WMJ 89.1 FM
Milwaukee School of Engineering
2900 N. Drackett Rd.
Milwaukee, WI 53209
414-278-2000
Email: music@wmj.org
Web: wmj.org
Format: eclectic

Wyoming

Coca-Cola Radio
Coca-Cola Foundation
500 W. 1st St.
Cheyenne, WY 82001
307-637-1600
Email: music@ccrfWy.org
Web: ccrfwy.org
Format: college, metal, folk, blues
Directory of College/Indie Radio

**WBUF 90.7 FM**
Fordham University
441 E. Fordham Rd.
Bronx, NY 10458-9993
718-817-4550
Email: musicdept@wbuf.org
Web: wbuf.org
Format: eclectic

**WICB 91.7 FM**
Ithaca College
92 WICB
118 Park Hall
Ithaca, NY 14850
607-274-3217, 607-274-1040 ext 1
Email: music@wicb.org
Web: wicb.org
Format: eclectic

**WNYU 89.1 FM**
5-11 University Pl.
New York, NY 10003
212-998-7698
Email: music@wnyu.org
Web: wnyu.org
Contact: Nesma Belkhodja
Format: eclectic

**WRHU-88.7 FM**
Hoistra University
111 Hoistra University
127 Dempster Hall
Hempstead, NY 11549
516-483-6773
Email: programming@wrhu.org
Web: whru.org
Contact: Maria Santana, Station Mgr.
Format: eclectic

**WRPI 91.5 FM**
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
1 WRPi Plaza
Troy, NY 12180-3590
518-276-8248
Email: wpri-pres@rpi.edu
Web: https://www.facebook.com/WRP1813/
Contact: Emma Goldman
Format: eclectic

**WRUR 88.5 FM**
University of Rochester
P.O. Box 30021
Rochester, NY 14614
585-275-9787
Email: music@wrur.org
Web: wrur.org
Format: AAA, eclectic

**WVKR 91.3 FM**
Vassar College
Box 726
124 Raymond Ave.
Poughkeepsie, NY 12604-0726
845-437-5476
Email: wkvkm@vassar.edu
Web: wkvr.org
Contact: Brendon Kienan, James Fast
Format: eclectic

**WNCN 88.1 FM**
North Carolina State University
343 Witherpoon Student Center
Campus Box 8607, Ste. 343
Raleigh, NC 27695-8607
919-515-2401
Email: pd@wnkn.org
Web: wkn.org
Contact: Becca Fesperman
Format: eclectic

**WSGE RADIO**
201 Highway 321 South
Dallas, NC 28034-1499
704-292-3357
Contact: Tim Greene, Assistant Prg. Director
Web: wsge.org

**WRVS 89.9 FM**
Elizabeth State University
1704 Weeksville Rd.
Elizabeth City, NC 27909
252-335-3515
Email: cmcnerc@ecsu.edu
Web: ecsu.edu/wrvs
Contact: Clayton Mercier, Interim Program Dir.
Format: jazz, R&B, gospel

**WXDU 88.7 FM**
Duke University
P.O. Box 90889
Durham, NC 27708
919-666-2957
Email: music@wxdu.org
Web: wxdu.org
Format: eclectic

**WXCY 89.3 FM**
University of North Carolina
2610 Carolina Union
Chapel Hill, NC 27599
919-843-7612
Email: mx@wxcy.org
Contact: Maxwell Brynn, Music Director
Format: eclectic

**WBWC 88.3 FM**
275 Eastland Rd.
Berea, KY 40407
440-826-7486
Web: wdbwc.com
Format: alt-rock

**WCGB 89.3 FM**
3100 Chester Ave., 4th Fl.
Cleveland, OH 44115
216-687-5076
Email: mdirector.wcgb@gmail.com
Web: wcgb.org
Contact: Jacob Clark
Format: free form

**WSOY 91.3 FM**
Antioch University Midwest
150 E. College St.
Yellow Springs, OH 45387
937-769-1383
Email: niki@wsoy.org
Web: wsoy.org
Contact: Niki Dakota, Music Dir.
Format: eclectic

**KLC RADIO**
Lewis & Clark
615 S W. Palatine Hill Rd.
Portland, OR 97219
503-768-7104
Email: klc@lc.clark.edu
Web: college.lclark.edu/student_life/klc_radio

**KPUS 98.1 FM**
Portland State University
SMSG 518
1825 SW Broadway
Portland, OR 97201
503-725-5669
Email: manager@kpus.org
Web: kpus.org
Contact: Madison Henderson
Format: eclectic

**KWWA 88.1 FM**
University of Oregon
P.O. Box 3157
Eugene, OR 97403
541-346-0645
Email: music@kwwaradio.org
Web: kwwaradio.org
Contact: Miguel Perez, Rhoby Nohiyuki
Format: eclectic

**WCLH 90.7 FM**
Wilkes University
84 W. S. St.
Wilkes Barre, PA 18701
570-408-2988
Email: kristen.rock@wilkes.edu
Web: wclh.org
Contact: Kristen Rock
Format: eclectic

**WEMBER 90.5 FM**
Gannon University
109 University Sq.
Erie, PA 16541
814-459-9374
Email: drew002@knights.gannon.edu
Web: wegfrfm.com
Contact: Andy Drew, Music Director
Format: eclectic

**WFSE 88.9 FM**
Fighting Scots Radio
Edinboro University of Pennsylvania
Early Hall
814-732-2889
Web: facebook.com/wfseradio
Format: all-rock

**WKDU 91.7 FM**
Drexel University
3210 Chestnut St.
Philadelphia, PA 19104
215-896-3500
Web: wkdu.org
Format: free form

**WPTS 92.1 FM**
University of Pittsburgh
411 William Pitt Union
3959 Fifth Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15260
412-383-9787
Email: music@wptsradio.org
Web: wpts.pitt.edu
Contact: Ryan Hartman
Format: eclectic

**WVRT 88.3 FM**
1 WRCT Plaza
5000 Forbes Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
412-621-0728
Email: info@wvrt.org
Web: wvrt.org
Format: eclectic

**WQHS**
University of Pennsylvania
Hollander Center 504
300 S. St.
Philadelphia PA 19104
215-896-3500
Email: wqhsradio@gmail.com
Web: wqhsradio.org
Format: eclectic

**WMHS**
Middle Tennessee State University
SMSU S18
701 W. College Ave.
Murfreesboro, TN 37132
615-898-5051
Email: music@wmhs.msstate.edu
Web: wmts.org
Contact: Andrew Felts, Music Director
Format: eclectic

**WVRU 91.1 FM**
Vanderbilt University
P.O. Box 9100, Station B
Nashville, TN 37235
615-322-7625
Email: wrvumusic@utk.edu
Web: wvru.org
Contact: Nick Kline
Format: eclectic

**WUTK 90.3 FM**
University of Tennessee, Knoxville
P105 Andy Holt Tower
Knoxville, TN 37996
865-974-2229
Email: wutkmusic@utk.edu
Web: wutkradio.com
Format: eclectic

**WSAT**
Student Radio
P.O. Box D
Austin, TX 78713-7209
512-473-1679
Email: music@kwov.org
Web: kwov.org
Contact: Lloyd Farley
Format: eclectic

**KVRX 91.7 FM**
Student Radio c/o UT
P.O. Box D
Houston, TX 77251-1892
Web: ktrn.org
Format: eclectic

**KAOS 89.3 FM**
The University of Washington
2700 Evergreen Pky. N.W., CAB 101
Olympia, WA 98505
360-434-9375
Email: music@kaosradio.org
Web: kaosradio.org
Contact: Mikey Rose, Music Director

**KJCS 88.1 FM**
Attn: Music Department
KJCS, FM Radio, MS. 7594
New Orleans, LA 70125
Web: siriusxm.com

**COMMON NONSENSE**
on Live 365
New Orleans, LA
Email: music@commonnonsenseroadio.com
Web: commonnonsenseroadio.com

**FEARLESS RADIO**
2341 S. Michigan Ave., Ste. 3F
Chicago, IL 60616
Email: music@fearlessradio.com
Web: facebook.com/fearlessradio

**RADIOINDY.COM**
P.O. Box 93492
Phoenix, AZ 85070
Email: support@radioindy.com
Web: radioindy.com

**AIRPLAYONLY**
Web: airplayaccess.com

**ALL ACCESS MUSIC GROUP**
24955 Pacific Coast Hwy., C303
Malibu, CA 90265
310-457-6616 Fax 310-457-8058
Web: allaccess.com
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**John Stevens, Laurent Stoeckli**

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Web: ruffsounds.com

Contact: Marko Babineau, Austin Keyes

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**National Record Promotion**

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323-658-7449

Email: lrwlr@larryweir.com

Web: larryweir.com

Contact: Larry Weir

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310-791-7617

Email: mneyor@larryweir.com

Web: mneyor@larryweir.com

Contact: Mike Naylor

**Styles/Specialties:** guitar-oriented rock, pop, specializing in national radio promotion, distribution and press campaigns

**Pirate!**

617-256-8709

Email: steve@piratepirate.com

Web: piratepirate.com

Contact: Steve Theo

**Additional location:**

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**Backstage Entertainment**

75 Arlene Ave.

Wilmington, MA 01887
978-558-3357

Email: info@evolutionpromotion.com

Web: evolutionpromotion.com

**Additional location:**

3039 Hillcrest Dr.
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Web: flanaganpromotions.com

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Ojai, CA 93023
805-382-2200

Email: howie@howiewood.com

Web: howiewood.com

Contact: Howard Rosen

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**Indie Power.com**

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Web: americanamp.com

Contact: Bill Wence

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Web: howiewood.com

Contact: Howard Rosen

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Failure is Part of the Optimization Process

Do me a favor real quick. I want you to take a deep breath... Breathe in through your nose. Pause for a few seconds. Then exhale slowly but forcefully through your mouth. Maybe repeat that one more time for good measure.

Now that we’re here. I want you to do something else. I want you to take a minute to give yourself some credit. If I had to guess, you probably don’t do that very often. Probably because you’re too busy focusing on what’s ahead. Stop for a second, though, and remember something very important. You are a rare breed.

When faced with the critical decision: “What am I going to do with my life?” you made a choice very few make. You trusted your gut and followed your passion. Maybe against the advice of people you respect. You understood pursuing a career in the entertainment business was risky. But in the end, you believe more than anything that loving what you do is important.

No one pursues a career in following their dreams because it’s a safe bet. It takes a serious degree of confidence and fearlessness to take the plunge and do what you’ve already done. Do yourself a favor, don’t forget that.

Stop Avoiding Failure
Fear or, specifically, fear of failure, is what keeps most people from pursuing their dreams, or just simply trying new things. We’ve already established you’re not like most people. That doesn’t mean you won’t still have to push yourself every day to get up and fight the same fight.

So, what exactly is failure? And why are most of us so afraid of it? If you dig deep enough, more often than not, it’s the perception of failure that’s so terrifying. There are two sides to it. From the outside looking in—we don’t want people to feel bad for us and our failure. And from the inside looking out—we never want to feel like our friends and peers are doing better in life than we are.

Funny thing, though. Working in the entertainment industry teaches you a lot about perception. It’s rarely a realistic picture of what’s behind the curtain. We have a surprising amount of control when it comes to perception. When you approach your work with confidence and excitement, you’ll be surprised by how much other people will follow your lead and consider you “successful.”

Accept The Struggle
My journey as an entrepreneur started over a decade ago. After college, I decided to pass up the relative stability of life with a degree and a steady job. Instead, I chose to follow my passion: music. In retrospect, that choice was relatively easy. It was just the start of an ultramarathon.

When you spend more than a decade on your own without a safety net, trying to build a business, you gain a number of invaluable life skills. Arguably the most important one for me has been getting comfortable with failure. Maintaining self-confidence through the years has always been a day-to-day struggle for me. I’ve spent a lot of my career trying to avoid failure. Wondering if I really have what it takes. I’ve also spent a lot of my career buying time and anticipating an end to the struggle. Waiting for the day when I could finally relieve the burden and enjoy “success.”

In case you haven’t lived long enough to know better. Spoiler alert: there is no end to the struggle. As you get older, the struggle only morphs and changes in ways you never expected. Amazingly, though, your ability to control it gets easier. But only once you settle in, and accept an important fact—life is struggle.

Breathe
After years of practicing, one deep breath can reframe an entire world of chaos in just a few seconds. This skill is fundamental for me at this point. Focused breathing, mindfulness and meditation are all tools I’m eternally grateful for learning when I did. It doesn’t matter who you are, controlling the inner dialog in your mind is a struggle.

Realizing you have control over your inner voice(s) is just the beginning. It’s important to challenge yourself every day to improve your control.

“Realizing you have control over your inner voice(s) is just the beginning. It’s important to challenge yourself every day to improve your control.”

CHRIS NARDONE is the CEO and founder of Nashville-based Venture Music, which combines artist needs and years of A&R expertise to create marketing, advertising and distribution plans while putting the artist first.
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